

## ABSTRACT

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### FBI FILES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPARISON OF LITERARY AND REAL-LIFE SERIAL KILLERS

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This study examines the psychology of fictional and real-life serial killers and the behavioral similarities between them. Three fictional murderers, mainly Macbeth (William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*), Buffalo Bill (*The Silence of the Lambs*), and the Creature (*Frankenstein*), as well as real life killers such as Charles Manson, Ed Gein, and Edmund Kemper were researched in depth. The data for this study was gathered from a variety of sources such as biographies, television interviews, published novels, articles, and documentaries. This study also focuses on predispositional factors and personality traits that led these killers to a life of crime. While no single behavioral trait was found to be present in every murderer studied, some of the psychological factors that were found to have predictive value included: abusive upbringings, mother hate, adoption, pornography, and brain damage were also reliable predictors in the lives of fictional and nonfictional perpetrators.

FBI FILES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPARISON OF LITERARY AND REAL-LIFE  
SERIAL KILLERS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the psychological linkages that seem to exist between some of the most notorious fictional murderers and their real-life counterparts. Real-life murderers such as Charles Milles Manson “The Killer Guru,” Edward Theodore Gein “The Plainfield Butcher,” and Edmund Emil Kemper III “The Co-ed Butcher” are compared with selected literary counterparts such as Macbeth in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Jame Gumb in Thomas Harris’ *The Silence of the Lambs*, and the Monster in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* to explain their dysfunction and their pathways to committing murder. These literary murderers indeed possess some of the psychological motivators such as paranoid schizophrenia, gender dysphoria, and self-hate that also led their real-life counterparts to incipient madness and murder.

It is no coincidence that the aforementioned literary killers imitate the criminal lives of real-life killers, which creates a kinship between them. Particularly, Charles Manson necessitates comparison with Shakespeare’s Macbeth because both murderers had an army of followers. Both Macbeth and Manson forged a pernicious bond with their inner circle in order to engage in criminal acts because they did not want to do so on their own. Therefore, both perpetrators had a folie à deux, that is the presence of the same or similar delusional ideas. The term “folie à deux” was developed by French psychologists Lasèque and Fabret to refer to two or more closely associated people, not

always family members, who share the same psychotic delusion. In addition to the communal effort of their slayings, Macbeth and Manson's most common psychological trait is paranoid delusional disorder, which became evident after murdering their first victim (s). After being sentenced to death for orchestrating the Tate-LaBianca murders, Manson was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and paranoid delusional disorder (*Helter Skelter* 628). Just like his real-life counterpart, Charles Manson, Macbeth became delusional after the death of King Duncan. The symptoms and manifestations of Macbeth's and Manson's psychoses will be discussed in chapter III of this dissertation.

Jame Gumb ("Buffalo Bill") was chosen to compare with Edward Gein because Gein was part of Gumb's composite character and inspiration for Thomas Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs*. Also, both murderers attempted to become transsexuals on their own. The Monster in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* was chosen as Edmund Kemper's literary counterpart because both murderers were ostracized and isolated by their creators because of their appearance and hulking stature, which caused them to feel a sense of worthlessness due to rejection. Furthermore, the literary murderers, examined in this study are appropriate because many literary murderers leave the progeny of their stories as a blueprint for real-life murderers to execute their own homicidal quests. Put plainly, serial murder is one of the components of art imitating life. For instance, serial killer David Harker, who strangled a thirty-two-year-old woman, cut up her body and ate chunks of her thigh with pasta and cheese said that he was a huge fan of *The Silence of the Lambs*. Harker once said, "People like me don't come from films, films come from people like me" (qtd. in *Serial Killer Files* 112). The same holds true for literature. For

this purpose, this study proceeds from the premise that many fictional murderers, in fact, are created from the stories of real-life killers, and real-life killers can also develop from the legend of fictional murderers. Hence, this dissertation will provide examples of how art imitates life. The psychological motivators such as paranoid schizophrenia, gender dysphoria, and self-deprecation, that ignite their murderous impulse, will constitute the basis of this research.

According to criminal profilers and psychologists such as John Douglas, Glenn Wilson, Robert K. Ressler, and Roy Hazelwood, all serial murderers possess the stigma of being insane, impulsive, and psychotic. Also, many killers have been proven to be sane by the legal system; however, serial killers can suffer from some type of psychological and emotional imbalance that propel them to murder. In addition, psychologists, criminal profilers, and neurologists have offered several psychological precipitators that can cause one to murder. According to criminal profiler Robert Ressler, in his book *Whoever Fights Monsters: My Twenty Years Tracking Serial Killers for the FBI*, drugs are seldom one of those factors (33). The Behavioral Analysis Unit and National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime and the FBI insist that all serial killers are not dysfunctional loners and that they are not only motivated by sex, but also anger, fantasy, and financial gain, and attention seeking can contribute to the causalities of murder. Coupled with this fact, neurologist Johnathan Pincus, in a Discovery Channel documentary titled *Actions That Lead a Person to Serial Killing*, provides his recipe for serial murder: abuse, brain damage, and mental illness. Pincus suggests that if there is damage to the prefrontal cortex (the area of the brain that controls impulse, judgment, reasoning, and social skills),



it can ruin impulse control. Pincus further suggests that mental illness can impair a person's judgment, but mental illness, on its own, does not lead to violence. So then, brain damage, mental illness, and childhood abuse also fuel an individual's murderous compulsion.

While the real-life serial killers that are studied in this research were never diagnosed with brain damage, they did, in fact, experience child abuse and suffer from mental illness. Specifically, Charles Manson suffered abuse at the hands of his uncle and schoolmates while Edward Gein and Edmund Kemper were verbally abused by their mothers by way of vicious corporal punishment. In Nuel Emmons' book *Manson in His Own Words: As Told to Nuel Emmons*, Manson reveals that his uncle would dress him in girl's clothing and call him a faggot. Manson also revealed that he was raped during his stay at the Gibault Home for Boys, and the other residents would tease him about the sexual abuse (42). Initially, Manson was diagnosed with anti-social personality disorder. As a result of the verbal and sexual abuse that he endured, Manson manifested his anger and resentment early in life through burglary and constantly running away. Likewise, Ressler notes that Gein's mental illness (schizophrenia) was diagnosed when he was a child as well (*Whoever Fights Monsters* 26); however, it was not displayed until after his mother's death when he began to hallucinate. Kemper was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia at Atascadero Hospital after he was convicted for the murder of his grandparents (*Edmund Kemper: The True Story of the Co-ed Killer* 9).

Harold Schechter, in his book *Serial Killer Files*, argues that if a person is maltreated in early years and subjected to constant psychological and physical abuse, he

or she will grow up with a malignant view of life (5). Criminal profiler John Douglas and his colleagues, at the Behavioral Science Unit, in Quantico, Virginia, affirm Schechter's argument by concluding that all serial killers are products of dysfunctional backgrounds, unstable, abusive, or deprived family situations. As Peter Vronsky mentions in his book *Serial Killers: The Method and Madness of Monsters*, sixty-six percent of serial killers had a dominant mother; thirty-five percent reported witnessing sexual violence as children; forty-three percent reported sexual abusive relationships, and seventy-two percent reported negative relationships with their parents in general (270). According to Vronsky, forty-two percent of murderers reported physical abuse, and seventy-four percent reported psychological abuse (271). Consequently, serial killers use murder as a means to inflict torture on others as a way of revenge because they have been psychologically warped by their cataclysmic experiences.

Ressler also notes, in his book, that killers strike back at society as a whole in order to avenge their agony (24). For example, Charles Manson's anger is rooted in his childhood. In Nuel Emmons' book, *Manson in His Own Words as Told to Nuel Emmons*, Manson revealed that as a result of his mother's rejection, his philosophy was trust no one, depend on no one (37). Manson's constant rejection left him in a state of harsh disappointment, which led to a life of murder, especially after a failed record deal with The Beach Boys. Similarly, Edmund Kemper's crimes were precipitated by his hostility and anger towards his mother, who was an overbearing alcoholic, absent father, favored sisters, and a grandmother who belittled him (*Whoever Fights Monsters* 248).

Granted, there are many individuals who have endured uneasy challenges and traumatic childhoods without any motivation to murder. Instead, they have become upstanding citizens despite the obstacles. For example, Oprah Winfrey (sexually abused at age fourteen), Tyler Perry (sexually abused as a child), Bill Clinton (abused by his stepfather Roger Clinton), and Maya Angelou (victim of childhood rape) just to name a few, endured some of the same obstacles as the previously mentioned real-life murderers, but they turned their pain into purpose by becoming successful talk show hosts, playwrights, poets, and the President of the United States. Hence, the FBI rejects the notion that serial killers murder as a defensive response to physical and psychological abuse. The FBI also concludes that all humans are the product of their heredity, their upbringing and the choices they make throughout development and program or condition themselves, in childhood, to become murderers in a loop of fantasies (*Serial Killer Files* 280). The psychological facilitator of fantasy is most evident in the case of Edmund Kemper because he was motivated by murderous fantasies that began in his childhood: “I know long before I started killing. . . the fantasies were too strong” (*Serial Killer Files* 30). So then, serial killers, like Edmund Kemper, live and rehearse their fantasies inside their heads prior to the first murder. In these fantasies, they depersonalize their victims and rehearse their homicidal rituals with scripts of violence and deviance. Law enforcement refers to this as “revenge fantasy” because it allows the murderers to fill any types of voids, which provides them with an escape from their situations of failures, disparity, ostracism, and rejection. Thus, their fantasies and the actual act of murder give them feelings of grandiosity and purpose. So, serial killers such as Kemper made a

choice, at an early age, to murder. In essence, free-will or personal agency is the only psychological motivator to murder, so there is no other single factor that leads to the development of a serial killer according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (*Serial Murder: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators* 12). As previously mentioned, there is a multitude of factors that contribute to their development; however, the most significant factor is the serial killer's personal decision to murder.

Conversely, behaviorist B.F. Skinner believes a person who commits a crime has no real choice. In his book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Skinner insists that individuals commit crimes because of environmental circumstances and personal history, which make breaking the law natural and inevitable (*Beyond Freedom and Dignity* 32). German psychologist Erich Fromm disagrees with Skinner. In his article, “In Ear of Freedom,” Fromm argues that all of us have the potential to control our own lives, but many of us are just afraid to do so. Fromm also writes that humans give up their freedom and allow their lives to be governed by their circumstances, political ideology, or just irritational feelings (1). So then, those who murder believe that they can only experience life by inflicting death on their victims, and the hardships that they endured is just an excuse to make society “pay.”

As serial murderers hide behind the mask of charm as normalcy in real-life, they have also earned a prominent place in a preponderance of fictional works. This dissertation utilizes references from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Thomas Harris’ *The Silence of the Lambs*, and Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein* to explain how fictional murderers such as Macbeth, Jame Gumb, and the Monster in *Frankenstein* have achieved infamy in the

fictional realm, while their real-life reflections have also achieved infamy in real-life. As a result, this research employs a comparative approach to examining the psychological triggers that led them to kill. Before undertaking any discussion of the psychoses and neuroses of these killers, a rudimentary explanation of the biological backgrounds and upbringings of Charles Manson, Edward Gein, and Edmund Kemper is necessary to understand the origins of their development and the factors that contributed to their psychopathy as they are compared to their literary resemblances—Macbeth, Jame Gumb, and the “Monster” in *Frankenstein*.

Fiona Watson’s *Macbeth: A True Story* highlights the life and kingship of Macbeth. Macbeth (Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland) was a military leader born in 1005 in Alba Scotland and died August 15, 1057, in Lumphanan, Scotland. Macbeth took the throne after killing his cousin, King Duncan. In 1046, Siward attempted to dethrone Macbeth in favor of Malcolm. Three years later, Macbeth was killed in battle by Malcolm, as reflected in Shakespeare’s play, with assistance from the English. According to Watson, the real Macbeth was not the murderous, paranoid character as portrayed in William Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Macbeth*; he was one of the greatest and most respected kings of Scotland. Macbeth’s grandfather became king around 1005—the same year that Macbeth was born. His father, Findláech MacRuairidh, was an earl of Moray, a province in northern Scotland. His mother Doadá, was the second daughter of Malcolm II (biography.com).

At the age of seven, Macbeth was sent to a Christian monastery to be educated by monks. At age fifteen, Macbeth’s cousins, Malcom and Gillecomgain, killed his father in

order to be close to Malcolm II, king of Scotland. After finishing school, Macbeth reappeared in 1032 when his cousin, Gillecomgain, was killed at the command of Malcolm II for his killing of Findláech. Macbeth was then elected mormaer of Moray. He then married Grouch (Gillecomgain's widow), and adopted her son, Lulach. The marriage strengthened his claim to the throne. On November 24, 1034, Malcolm II died of natural causes. One month later, his son, Duncan, was elected king. Duncan ruled Scotland for six years with known incompetence on the battlefield.

In 1040, Duncan opened up two fronts. The attack on the Orkneys Islands was led by his nephew, Modani, and Duncan led a force toward Northumbria. Both armies were soon routed and only to be pursued by Thorfinn, mormaer of Orkney. On August 14, 1040, Macbeth defeated Duncan's army, killing him in the process. Later that month, Macbeth led his forces to Scone, the Scottish capital, and, at age thirty-five, he was crowned king of Scotland; however, in 1057, Malcolm (son of Duncan) sought support in winning back the throne by convincing some of Macbeth's allies to join him in doing so. It was near Aberdeen that Malcolm beheaded Macbeth and took his remains to Iona, the western coast of Scotland for burial.

Just as Macbeth aspired to be king of Scotland, his real-life reflection, Charles Manson, wanted to be a leader of the world as explained by Vincent Bugliosi in his book *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*. Manson was a convicted psychopathic cult leader born on November 12, 1934, in Cincinnati, Ohio. As the son of Kathleen Maddox, a prostitute, he became involved with a number of crimes when he was a child such as theft, burglary, and running away from juvenile detention centers.

During Manson's stay in Washington, D.C.'s National Training School for Boys, a caseworker perceived Manson as progressively anti-social with homosexual proclivities (Bugliosi 93). In addition, Manson's rebellious nature caused him to be a constant discipline problem for authorities. As he confessed to Emmons, there was always something lacking in his makeup (*Manson in His Own Words* 54).

In order to influence and charm others, Manson became an avid reader of Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. Manson preached the philosophy of Scientology among his hippie followers who referred to him as their "guru." In 1939, when police detained his mother on a robbery charge, Manson went to live with his aunt Glenna and her family in McMechen, West Virginia (*Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson* 17-18).

During his mother's 1942 parole, Maddox retrieved Manson, and they lived in run-down hotels. Later, the court placed him in Gibault School for Boys in Terre Haute, Indiana, from where he escaped after his mother failed to take responsibility. Manson began his life of crime by engaging in criminal activities such as forging checks and stealing from grocery stores in order to survive (Emmons 45). During the majority of his adolescence, he spent time incarcerated. As a result, Manson became content with his life in jail. Upon his release from Terminal Island, in 1967, Manson asked if he could remain in prison because the streets were not the place for him. As a result of the constant rejection, by his mother, he saw himself as a bogus bastard, so he was afraid to cope in a world that he never understood (Emmons 77). Two years later, his fear of social

dysfunction became a reality when he spear-headed the most famous murders in the history of Los Angeles.

As one of the most famous mass murderers in history, Manson and his followers have gained much infamy from interviews, documentaries, movies, biographies, and magazines. Wherefore, Manson's exposure has grown intensely, and he has been dubbed one of the most famous miscreants of the twentieth century. Charles Manson, also known to his followers as "Jesus Christ," "satan," and their "guru," was the mastermind of one of the most callous crime sprees in U.S. history known as "Helter Skelter." Almost fifty years later, Manson and his "family" continue to serve as one of the main sources of horror, and Manson, especially, continues to repel the public's senses.

In truth, Manson never killed anyone or played any physical part in the butchery for which he will forever be associated. According to Lief et al, in their article "Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury: Greatest Closing Arguments of Modern Law," in 1972, Manson was convicted as a result of the California Penal Code of "Joint Responsibility Rule of Conspiracy," which mandates that those who conspire in murder may be indicted equally with the offenders who physically committed the murder (s). Manson chose not to participate in the Tate-LaBianca murders because he did not want to return to prison, and the rest of the "family" gave him his first sense of belonging (Emmons 194). In the same way, Manson said that he did not plan these murders, but he felt that he was losing control of his "family." Further, as Manson states in Nuel Emmons' book, *Manson in His Own Words: The Shocking Confessions of the Most Dangerous Man Alive*, Manson said that he never thought things would turn out the way that they did. He states, "At that



time, not in a million years could I have been convinced that things would turn out bloody and bad” (129). According to Manson, he did not plan the Tate-LaBianca murders, but he needed to do something “witchy” in order to “shake up” the world. Manson has undoubtedly entered the ranks of the most infamous criminals, as his gruesome murders assured him and his followers a lifetime in prison without the possibility of parole. Therefore, Manson utilized his pernicious charisma to convince upstanding citizens to kill. For example, Patricia Krenwinkel was an avid Bible reader and Presbyterian Sunday school teacher; Charles “Tex” Watson was a student at the North Texas State University and a member of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity; Sandra Good held a Master’s degree and Susan Atkins sang in the church choir in San Jose, California, and nursed her mother who was dying of cancer. Specifically, Atkins’ life began to unravel in a downward spiral after she lost her mother to cancer. In Vincent Bugliosi’s *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders*, he mentions that Atkins confessed that she had no guilt in murdering for Manson. According to Atkins, she was doing what was right. Atkins also admitted that as Sharon Tate mercifully pleaded for her life, Atkins replied, “Look bitch I have no mercy for you” (560). In addition to her will to kill, Atkins’ lack of remorse was the most conspicuous evidence in her downward spiral to psychopathy. In the 1971 trial, Atkins further testified that “Charlie is pure love. It feels good when the knife is going in” (*Helter Skelter* 128). Thus, in 1969, Manson provided the ideal heinous, murderous hunting ground, replete with other determined psychopaths, which is the critical component of his development as a serial killer.

Manson's other followers conformed to his preaching and beliefs through sex, drugs (LSD), money, music, and his "helter skelter" preaching as he struggled to maintain his position as a demagogue and leader of his "family." Manson's "family" utilized Spahn Ranch as their communal crash pad where his colorful jailhouse stories and guitar gained him his "sexual freedom," and he no longer had to participate in his former illegal activity (burglary, forgery, and car theft) in order to survive. On August 9, 1969, Manson solidified his title as the "killer guru" and executed his mesmerizing dominance over his "family" by way of the Tate-LaBianca murders, which brought the 1960s to a bloody conclusion and the residents of Los Angeles to their knees.

While Manson and his family are known as zealous bigots, he commanded his followers to start a war between blacks and whites, after which he and the family would become leaders of the "new world." Unlike other serial and mass murders, Manson did not extract any excitement from the murders; however, his satisfaction derived from the knowledge that he had complete control over his flock. Manson served forty-seven years of his life sentence at Corcoran State Prison for his involvement in the Tate-LaBianca murders. He transitioned to the "greater beyond" at Bakersfield Hospital on November 19, 2017.

Criminal profilers believe that all serial killers have something in common: void and desire (Ressler 26). This void is especially evident in the life of fictional serial killer Jame Gumb, also known as "Buffalo Bill," in Thomas Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs*. Gumb was born a woman—so he *thinks*—in California, in 1948 and was abandoned by his mother. He was born to a prostitute and an alcoholic who initially named him James

but misspelled his name incorrectly (Jame) on the birth certificate, so the error went unchanged (Harris 357). Gumb, in fact, preferred being called Jame because of the feminine sound that the name elicited. Gumb was abandoned by his mother at age two and placed in foster care. After a brief stay with his foster parents, Gumb was adopted by his grandparents who became his first victims when he murdered them impulsively at age twelve (*The Silence of the Lambs* 172). Afterward, he was sent to Tulare Vocational Rehabilitation Psychiatric Hospital, where he was taught to sew and, as a result, became a very skilled tailor.

Harris also reveals that after Gumb's release from Tulare Vocational Rehabilitation Psychiatric Hospital, he gained employment in restaurants and clothing stores. After he began working in a Baltimore curio store, he forged a romantic acquaintance with Benjamin Raspail (a patient of Dr. Hannibal Lecter and Lecter's ninth victim) even though he was not gay. Raspail described Gumb (to Dr. Hannibal Lecter) as being neither transsexual nor gay, but he did articulate that Gumb was an extremely disturbed man with no sense of self and adopted an identity that suited him at any time. Gumb was eventually fired from the curio store and stole a suitcase from there. After he opened the suitcase, he discovered many moths and butterflies, which became part of his murderous signature (Harris 358). Benjamin Raspail's termination of his relationship with Gumb was a rising action in Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs*. Raspail ended his relationship with Gumb due to his erotic behavior and became romantically involved with a Norwegian sailor named Klaus who Gumb murdered out of jealousy; however, Raspail was blamed for the murder (Harris 59).

Subsequent to Klaus' murder, Gumb began applying for sex reassignment surgery at John Hopkins, University of Minnesota, and Columbus Medical Center. Unfortunately, all of his applications were declined because he was mentally disturbed, and he had a criminal record. As stated in Harris' novel, a criminal record automatically disqualifies an applicant, unless the crime is harmless and related to gender identity such as cross-dressing in public (Harris 166). Nonetheless, Gumb attacked a doctor because he was denied the surgical procedure. Shortly thereafter, through Raspail, Gumb was introduced to psychiatrist Hannibal Lecter, but Gumb only went to one session.

After Gumb's session with Lecter, he began his career as a tailor in Belvedere, Ohio, in 1982, where he met Frederic Bimmel, an overweight woman whose skin fascinated him. Gumb began to realize that the only way that he could acquire his status as a woman was to make himself into a woman by fashioning his own women's suits with the skin of his victims. As the first step in achieving his goal of womanhood, he purchased Mrs. Lippman's house because of the huge basement, a large dry well, and two stories. He would house his victims in the basement until he inflicted their fatal demise. Gumb inherited the property after he murdered Mrs. Bimmel and Mrs. Lippman and by using his alias "John Grant." After these murders, he proceeded to abduct and kill four other women, and like Bimmel, he housed them in his large, dry well, making them clean their skin with lotion before hanging and skinning them. As a result of his murderous signature, Gumb received the nickname "Buffalo Bill" from officers in Kansas City homicide for a bad joke indicating that "this one likes to skin his lumps" (Harris 21). According to Angela Tung, in her article, "6 Significant *The Silence of the Lambs* Names

to Sink Your Teeth Into,” Gumb’s nickname originated from showman Buffalo Bill Cody who was accused of skinning a Cheyenne Indian in war and hunting thousands of buffalo making one of them into a coat.

Even more disturbing is Gumb’s sadistic indulgence in shooting at his victims as they would attempt to flee while trapped in his basement. He also views and refers to his victims as “it” to depersonalize them, so murdering them would be easy. Gumb’s psychological pathology, again, can be traced back to his childhood, which, according to the novel, was replete with physical and emotional abuse. Lecter stated, in a conversation with Clarice Starling, that Gumb was not born that way; he was made a monster as a result of the years of systematic abuse (Harris 53). FBI rookie and the novel’s protagonist, Clarice Starling, ended Gumb’s career as a tailor and serial murderer as she discovered his true identity with the assistance of Hannibal “the Cannibal” Lecter. Gumb’s attempt to kill Starling failed as she shot and killed him in his home. Starling was also known as a hero for saving the life of Catherine Martin, who would have been Gumb’s sixth victim.

As Jame Gumb (“Buffalo Bill”) in Thomas Harris’ *The Silence of the Lambs* committed his heinous crimes out of the desire to become a woman, his real-life reflection, Edward Gein gained notoriety for murdering women, as he shared the same motive as Gumb, sex reassignment. Edward Theodore Gein also was known as “The Butcher of Plainfield” possessed an obsession for his mother, Augusta Gein, while Manson resented his mother, Kathleen Maddox. Harold Schechter provides the background of Edward Gein and his family in his book *Deviant: The Ed Gein Story*.

According to Schechter, when Gein's mother was alive, they had a close-knit relationship, and his mother was his only friend and the only woman he ever loved (8). Edward Gein was born on August 27, 1906, to his deeply religious Lutheran mother, Augusta Gein, and a violent, alcoholic father, George Gein. The family owned a grocery store in LaCrosse, which allowed them to purchase a farm in Plainfield, Wisconsin, so Plainfield became their permanent home. Mrs. Gein relocated her family to this rural area, so her sons (Edward and Henry) would not be influenced by the evils of the world. Therefore, the family was extremely isolated, and Augusta Gein kept her sons segmented from the rest of the world (*Deviant 2*). Edward Gein only left the premises to attend school, and his mother would not allow any attempted friendships forged by her sons. As a result of the isolation, Edward Gein was known to his neighbors a loner as a child because he spent the majority of his time working on his mother's farm when he was not at school. His schoolmates and teachers noticed his random laughter and outbursts, which led to rejection by his peers; his classmates dubbed him as "weird." This stigma can also be attributed to his lack of social development. Adding to his social dysfunction, Mrs. Gein constantly preached about the evil of the world, the evil of drinking, and that all women were dirty and descendants of the devil. However, Plainfield's most notorious murderer was very astute with the Word of God. Gein's mother would also extract Bible verses from the Old Testament, concerning death and murder, to underline her rhetoric regarding the evil in the world. As well, his mother forbade him to befriend anyone, so the only socializing that Gein was allowed to do was working for neighbors as a babysitter, which he enjoyed. Augusta Gein constantly instilled in her sons that all

women were prostitutes and whores, with herself as an exception. According to Mrs. Gein's theory, coitus was only acceptable for procreation.

Schechter also reveals that Gein was the product of a tragic childhood because of his mother's verbal abuse and his father's alcoholism (*Deviant* 8). Edward Gein, nevertheless, deified his mother; consequently, his older brother, Henry, was bothered by their bond. Gein's only attempt to detach himself from his mother was in 1942 when he traveled to Milwaukee for a physical examination in hopes of joining the military; he was rejected because of a growth over his eye, which impaired his vision. Because of the growth, Gein was often scorned by his peers. After the death of his mother, in 1945, Gein became a recluse; and in the years following his mother's death, Gein sectioned off areas of the house that his mother used frequently to preserve them as a shrine in her memory and for future female victims that he skinned. Because of Mrs. Gein's death, Edward Gein was maladjusted to society. His only place of comfort was in the presence of children, according to Schechter, so he babysat to fill his social void.

Gein's inability to adjust to society went unnoticed, for others deemed him as a good neighbor (*Deviant* 26). Adeline Watkins even reported that she was Gein's sweetheart, and he proposed marriage to her, but she declined. Gein's psychoses (transvestism, necrophilia, fetishism, and schizophrenia) were camouflaged by Gein's pleasant countenance. Unbeknownst to the residents of Plainfield, they were communing with Wisconsin's most notorious murderer in the making. After the death of his mother, Edward Gein began robbing graves, keeping body parts as trophies, and practicing necrophilia. He then turned to murder, in 1957, when he killed at least two women in

Plainfield, Wisconsin, in 1957. Like Jame Gumb, Gein's crimes were rooted in his desire to become a woman.

As Peter Vronsky highlights in *The Definitive History of the Phenomenon of Serial Murder*, Edward Gein was a notorious, hedonistic serial killer. Vronsky also notes that Gein killed to harvest human body parts, especially the husk of a female head and torso that he wore like a body suit. Also, Gein tailored vests made from female torsos and made nine masks made from the flesh of female faces (180). Gein, as Vronsky indicates, had no particular compulsion to murder; he just needed female corpses, so he was left with no other choice but to commit murder. Even though Gein did everything he could to attempt to become his deceased mother, it has been a matter of debate, among law officials, if Gein was actually a transsexual. Upon his arrest, Gein confessed to the murder of two women, both of whom he thought to resemble his mother, but he also asserted the insanity plea (*Deviant* 220). In 1957, Gein was deemed by the court to be unfit for trial and was placed in various psychiatric institutions. In 1968, Gein was tried and found guilty of the murders of Mary Hogan (1954) and Bernice Worden (1957), and he was sent to Wisconsin State Hospital in Mendota where he remained until his death in 1984.

So far, this chapter has highlighted real and fictional "monsters" as FBI profiler Robert K. Ressler dubs serial killers in his book *I Have Lived in the Monster: Inside the Minds of the World's Most Notorious Serial Killers*. The word "monster" has been synonymous with one of the most famous literary killers, the creature in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. In Shelley's most notable novel, the protagonist is a scientist dedicated to



the study of chemistry in order to create life out of inanimate matter. Unfortunately, the creation of Frankenstein brings him much repulsion and terror. Frankenstein is so horrified by his creation that he flees his home, leaving the Monster behind (5). The Monster is described in Shelley's novel as having wrinkly skin, black lips, black hair, and yellow eyes. He was created on a rainy November night in Ingolstadt, Germany. The novel also reveals that Victor Frankenstein deserts the tragic villain as a result of his disappointment and disgust of his appearance. Consequently, the Monster vowed to torment Victor for the rest of his life. After Victor Frankenstein abandons his unfortunate creation, the Monster adorns himself in a coat to cover himself and wanders off into the wilderness. As he wandered through the wild, many individuals became petrified of Frankenstein's creature. They would run from him just as his creator had done.

The Monster eventually came across the DeLacey family as he took up shelter in a small cottage. It was there he learned how to speak and read from observing the DeLacey's. While living in the cottage, the Monster indulged in reading books that he found in an abandoned suitcase, which included the works of John Milton and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. He also discovered some of Victor Frankenstein's notes, in the coat he was wearing, which he also read. In her novel, Shelley highlights a little ray of hope for the Monster as he grew to love the DeLacey family. Eventually, the Monster reveals himself to Mr. DeLacey, the blind patriarch, while his young adult children were absent from the cottage. Much to the chagrin of the monster, Mr. DeLacey's children made him flee from their house after discovering him (the Monster) with their father and deemed him as a threat. This rejection enrages the Monster and, as retaliation, he sets fire

to the cottage, and declares revenge on Frankenstein for creating him for a world that despises him. While reading Frankenstein's notes, he learns that Frankenstein's family resides in Geneva, Switzerland.

After the Monster becomes privy to Frankenstein's geographical roots, he begins his journey to take revenge on his creator. The creature makes a voyage to Geneva, Switzerland, and meets William, Victor Frankenstein's five-year-old brother; however, this meeting did not turn into a happy ending (I will expand on this in chapter five). After the Monster completed the first part of his quest for revenge, he then travels to the Alps to confront Frankenstein. It is here that the doctor makes a deal with the Monster in the form of another creation in exchange for his freedom from the Monster's torment. Frankenstein makes this promise to the Monster and travels to Scotland, where he commences to create the Monster's female counterpart. Unbeknownst to Victor Frankenstein, the Monster is following him watching in anticipation, but Frankenstein ends up destroying his subsequent creation, which further enrages the Monster. As a result, he promises Frankenstein that he *will*, indeed, "pay" for his failure to uphold his promise. For this reason, the Monster holds to his promise (revenge) in an attempt to murder his inventor. In the conclusion of Shelley's novel, both the Monster and Frankenstein face death which will be (see chapter five for a full discussion).

Just like the Monster in *Frankenstein*, there is a real-life serial killer who was known to be a hideous-looking creature of great stature and inhuman strength. After being apprehended by police, many onlookers of Edmund Kemper's crimes often pondered on the thought of his inhumane failure to empathize and feel just like his

literary counterpart, the Monster in *Frankenstein*. Many have deemed Edmund Kemper to be one of the most demented and twisted serial killers ever because of his signature in the murders committed, that included decapitation and necrophilia. Kemper's murderous crime spree merited him a dark legacy in history. Edmund Emil Kemper III's life journey began on December 18, 1948, in Burbank, California. He was the middle child of Edmund Kemper, Jr. and Clarnell Kemper. After his parents divorced in 1957, he moved to Montana with his mother and sisters (*Edmund Kemper: The True Story of the Co-ed Killer* 1). His relationship with his mother, like that of Manson, was that of detachment filled with mother hate. Mrs. Kemper was an alcoholic, and she was very critical and blamed her son for her failed relationships with men. His mother once stated, "Because of you, my murderous son, I haven't had sex with a man for five years" (Vronsky 260). Because of his mother's disdain for him, murder became part of his fantasies.

At the age of ten, his mother forbade him to live with the rest of the family, so he lived in the basement of their home because Mrs. Kemper felt that his gargantuan stature was a threat to the safety of his sisters; she was afraid that he would sexually assault his sisters because of his monstrous size. Again, his mother's hatred towards him was a psychological motivator in his crimes, for he became a self-loathing murderer and necrophiliac. Soon, Kemper developed fantasies of killing those he knew. For instance, he dreamt of killing his second-grade teacher and having sex with her corpse (Vronsky 258).

Kemper's matricidal fury was manifested early in his childhood, as he had dreams of killing his mother because he knew that his mother perceived him as her bestial

progeny. Specifically, his mother constantly told him that he reminded her of his father, whom she also hated. As mentioned in Jack Rosewood's book, *Edmund Kemper: The True Story of the Co-Ed Killer*, Kemper would run away from home, chop the heads of his sisters' dolls, and coerced them into his self-made game that he called "gas chamber" where he would have them blindfold him, place him in a chair, tie him up and he would writhe around and act out an agonizing death (4). Also, he would kill cats and bury some of them alive. Because of Kemper's behavior, his mother sent him to live with his father, but his stay was abbreviated there. He returned to his mother who then decided to send him to his grandparents in Norfolk, California.

Prior to arriving at his grandparent's farm, Kemper had become well-versed in using guns and other firearms. After killing birds and other small animals, his grandparents confiscated his rifle. This would further enrage Kemper leading to his first murder on August 27, 1964, which will be fully discussed in chapter five. He underwent a variety of tests while incarcerated; the results determined that Kemper had a very high IQ of one hundred and forty-five, but prison psychologists diagnosed him with paranoid schizophrenia (Rosewood 9-10). His intellect and charm allowed him to befriend psychiatrists at the prison. It was there that he learned how to manipulate mental evaluations by administering psychiatric tests to other prisoners. He also learned from imprisoned sex offenders that he should kill any witnesses after rape. Prison psychiatrists regarded Kemper as a good, skilled worker, and they believed that he was not the typical sociopath. Because of this, he was sent to Atascadero State Hospital for mentally ill convicts.

In 1969, Kemper was given a second chance at a life of freedom at age twenty-one. The prison doctors advised him not to return to his mother's home because of past abuse and her psychological issues. In spite of their recommendation, her son would rejoin her because he had nowhere else to live. Once again, he was rejected by his father, so Kemper's release would take him to Santa Cruz, California, where his mother relocated after the dissolution of her third marriage, as she began working at the University of California (Rosewood 7). While residing in Santa Cruz, Kemper's intelligence netted him a seat at a community college, and he also worked a variety of jobs which included the Department of Transportation in 1971. Kemper was still ordered to undergo a psychiatric evaluation after his release. After one evaluation, Kemper returned to his car with a severed head in the back of his car. He would cut off the heads of his victims and rape the headless corpse.

On one occasion, Kemper applied to be a state trooper, but he was denied employment because of his size. He weighed around three hundred pounds standing six feet nine inches tall. This led to his nickname "Big Ed." His failed request to work as a state trooper did not stop him from befriending the Santa Cruz police. Peter Vronsky reveals in *The Definitive History of the Phenomenon of Serial Murder* that Kemper often conversed with police, regarding current homicide cases, at different bars in hopes of gaining inside information on the status of investigations (260). One officer, in particular, gave him a training school badge and handcuffs, while another let him borrow a gun, which was a mistake in which ten individuals would pay for.

As a result of a fifteen-thousand-dollar lawsuit settlement, from a motorcycle crash, Kemper was able to purchase his own car that resembled a police cruiser that he utilized in his crime spree that lasted from May 1972 to April 1973. His spree began with two college students and ended with his mother and her best friend (Vronsky 265). He used his car to lure females in to complete his “mission.” After he purchased his car, Kemper commenced to rehearsing for his series of fatalities (*Whoever Fights Monsters* 65). He would pick up hitchhiking women to develop a non-threatening, gentle persona. As B.W. Battin indicates in his book, *Serial Blood*, it is not unusual for serial killers to rehearse their first murder (25). He observes that "Serial killers are often meticulous planners. They may prepare for months, plotting every detail, right down to what the victim should be wearing. Sometimes they'll bring the clothing they envisioned with them and then make the victim put it on. . . We call it the rehearsal fantasy" (135). Rehearsing is very important for many serial murders because many law enforcement officials believe that their first murder is the most critical. In subsequent murders, they begin to perfect their “craft.”

The inglorious tale of Edmund Kemper came to an abrupt halt when he turned himself into police to confess and waited near the phone booth to be arrested after growing tired of torturing and murdering women. Kemper called the police and confessed to killing eight women; however, the police thought he was drunk and refused to take him seriously (Rosewood 67). After he killed his mother and her best friend on Good Friday, in 1973, he felt that he had accomplished an honorable task in destroying his creator, (his mother) and her friend. Hence, his work was done in society, and he was now ready to

retire as “the Co-ed Butcher.” Kemper stood trial and was found sane and guilty on ten counts of first-degree murder. During his sentencing, Kemper requested death by torture (Rosewood 85). Instead, he was sentenced to seven years to life for each count with his sentences to run concurrently according to Rosewood. At the time of Kemper’s trial, capital punishment had been abolished in the state of California. Kemper is currently serving his sentence at California Medical Facility in Vacaville, California.

Grasping the psychological disorders of real-life and fictional killers is vital to understanding the motives of their crimes. This dissertation endeavors to shed light on the psychological characteristics of real-life murderers such as paranoid schizophrenia, gender dysphoria, and self-hate. In addition, the study compares the real-life murderers with their real-life counterparts to critique the similarities and differences between both categories of murderers. This dissertation is segmented according to the following chapter structures. Chapter I introduces the serial killers that are featured in this study and their backgrounds from childhood to adulthood. The focus of this chapter is to also introduce some of the psychological stressors that may lead to murder. Chapter II comprises the literature review which outlines the research that is significant to this study. The literature review also consists of the works of experts in the field of criminology, psychology, neurology, sociology, and law enforcement.

Chapter III advances the idea that Charles Manson is essentially a psychological reflection of literary serial murderer Macbeth in the form of paranoid delusional disorder. The chapter also attempts to compare the demise of their relationships, suggesting how those disintegrated relationships were also representations of their psychological

impairments. In Chapter IV, this study examines Jame Gumb in Thomas Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs* and his psychological relation (gender dysphoria) to Edward Gein. The chapter also presents the idea that both murderers, indeed, did not want to kill. Both murderers needed something from women, but their lives were in the way.

Chapter V discusses the Monster's and Edmund Kemper's motives that are based on their stigmas as outsiders because of their phenotypical attributes. I will also argue that this duo of murderers are individuals who experienced otherness and failed at social integration and acceptance because they were rejected by their creators, Frankenstein and Clarnell Kemper. To conclude this study, Chapter VI espouses the argument that the destructive scenarios that surround the murderers that were featured in this study eventually crafted their own doom, and the destruction led to their own death both socially and physically.



## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature of psychologists, criminal profilers, and neurologists who have offered theories on the precursors to serial murder. These theories include rejection, mother hate, child abuse, brain injury, and sexual abuse. This literature review will highlight some of the most prominent individuals who have examined the brain of serial murders and law enforcement officials who have conducted extensive research on the psychosis of serial killers. The literature that is reviewed in this chapter will highlight the theories of criminal profilers, neurologists and psychologists as to why killers kill and what triggers their psychoses.

In order to complete this literature review, it is important, to begin with the origin and definition of the term “serial killer” and the theories on what makes serial killers kill. Criminal profiler and former director of the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program, Robert K. Ressler is credited with coining the term “serial killer.” In Ressler’s book *Whoever Fights Monsters*, he explains how he coined the term “serial killer.” According to Ressler, multiple murders such as the ones committed by David Berkowitz (“The Son of Sam”) were first called “stranger killings,” but the term was considered to be a misnomer, according to Ressler, because sometimes killers *do* know their victims (32). In his book, Ressler reflects on his participation in a week of lectures at Bramshill, a

British police academy in Hampshire, England. Ressler states that he overheard a man discussing what the British referred to as crimes in a series: series of rapes, burglaries, arsons, and murders (32). As a result, Ressler considered it appropriate to describe the killings of those who commit one murder, then another in a fairly repetitive way as serial killing. So, in Ressler's classes at Quantico, and other places, he began to use the term "serial killer." Ressler defines the term "serial killer" as the killing of two or more people with a cooling off or heating up period in between. To add, in the article entitled "Sexual Killers and Their Victims: Identifying Patterns Through Crime Scene Analysis," Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas define the term "serial killer" as involving the murder of separate victims with time breaks between victims as minimal as two days to weeks or months. Ressler et al refer to the breaks between their murders as the "cooling off period" of serial killers (8).

Peter Vronsky, Robert K. Ressler, Jack Levin, John Douglas, and Harold Schechter are among some of the country's leading authors, criminologists and behavioral profilers whose works—both books and articles—permeate the available research on serial, mass, and spree murderers. When one examines their studies as a whole, it becomes clearer that the cause of violence and aggression lies in a combination of variables that serial killers experience from birth to childhood. These dominant factors that may lead individuals to commit murder include child abuse, brain injury, mother hate, self-hate, and sexual abuse; however, these negative factors do not justify murder, for many of those who were afflicted, during childhood, overcame their tumultuous pasts. Yet put together, what makes individuals who do not turn to murder different from those

that turn to lives engulfed of murder and a lust to kill? As mentioned in chapter one, there is no definitive answer to this question that has been asked by psychologists, law enforcement officials, and medical experts. However, much of the available literature does provide background information on the killers that make us understand their purpose and motive.

Serial killer Theodore “Ted” Bundy, who dubbed himself as an only expert in serial murder, offered a simple theory to the devilish plots of serial murder in Stephen G. Michaud and Hugh Aynesworth’s *Ted Bundy: Conversations with a Killer*. Bundy states, “The thing is, some people are just psychologically less ready for failure than others. Some can handle failure in a positive way; others cannot” (68). Although, Bundy’s simplistic reasoning still does not suffice to answer the question of what makes a serial killer, books like the one written about Bundy do much more than focus on the lives of some of the most notorious, dangerous individuals of all time; they create a psychological history of the murderers, that recaps their childhood, their capture, and other factors that may have caused them to “snap.”

In an attempt to investigate the psychology behind literary and real-life serial murders, many biographies and other literature sources that trace the childhood, the early years, and the adulthood of real-life offenders such as Charles Manson, Edward Gein, and Edmund Kemper III became useful for this research. The information about the lives of these murderers only appears in the form of what they shared in personal interviews, books, articles, information shared by friends and family, and psychiatric evaluations. The most significant discovery that is central in this research is that these killers can be

psychologically compared to those in the literature (Macbeth in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Jame Gumb in *The Silence of the Lambs*, and the Monster in *Frankenstein*). These comparisons will be discussed in chapters three through five.

The articles and books provide details on the lives of Manson, Gein, and Kemper and address the dysfunction such as childhood abuse, peer rejection, and domineering mothers, which served as pre-crime stressors to their lives of crime. Other popular mediums such as television documentaries and personal interviews have followed the lead of many criminologists and psychologists in an attempt to understand their psyche. The literature that surrounds these killers also focuses on the mental illnesses that became precrime stressors in their crimes. For example, Charles Manson was diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder, and both Edward Gein and Edmund Kemper were diagnosed with schizophrenia (*Helter Skelter* 193; *Deviant* 190; and *Edmund Kemper* 9). Thus, criminologists and criminal profilers such as John Douglas, Robert K. Ressler, and Jack Levin have devoted their time to studying how the psychological impairments of serial killers catapulted into murder.

Criminologists James Alan Fox and Jack Levin, in their article "Multiple Homicide: Patterns of Serial and Mass Murder," argue that the motivational typology for serial murder includes power, revenge, loyalty, profit, and terror. The authors specifically examine five components of serial murderers: a) profile of serial killers b) power and control c) state of mind d) profile of victims, and e) apprehension of serial killers (410). Fox and Levin define serial killing as a string of four or more homicides committed by one or a few perpetrators that span a period of days, weeks, months, or even years. In

examining the profile of serial killers, the authors make it clear that serial murder is typically a stranger killing. Specifically, males prey on strangers based on their fantasies that involve capture and control. Conversely, the authors state that female serial killers generally kill victims with whom they have shared some kind of relationship, most often in which the victim is dependent on them. As an exception, according to Fox and Levin, Aileen Wuornos (a Florida prostitute who murdered seven men in 1989) targeted strangers (414). In examining the physical profile of serial killers, Fox and Levin utilize Theodore Bundy “The Co-ed Killer” to demystify the common stereotype of the typical serial killer as being a high-school dropout and unattractive. Bundy, unlike many other serial killers, was handsome, well-spoken, and an educated law student who murdered thirty-three women from Washington to Florida in the 1970s. He utilized his charm and wit to lure his victims and elude the police for years. In short, Fox and Levin conclude that many serial killers strive to be “extraordinarily ordinary” (413). This is also evident in the character of Macbeth which will be explained in chapter three.

In examining the aspect of power and control, Fox and Levin suggest that murder, for killers, is a form of expressive, rather than instrumental violence. The authors refer to the studies of the American Psychiatric Association for evidence as they conclude that serial killers derive sexual pleasure through inflicting humiliation, physical, and psychological suffering on another human being. Furthermore, Fox and Levin argue that serial killers also gain pleasure from the media’s attention; it makes them feel empowered and famous (415). In addition to the thrill of murder, serial killers become gratified,

according to the authors, by watching the police and the media work tirelessly to solve the cases that they (the killer) have constructed.

The state of mind in the life of serial killers was also an important topic of study in Fox and Levin's journal article. The authors respond to the popular belief that many serial killers are deeply disturbed and legally insane. Fox and Levin theorize that most serial killers are neither delusional nor confused; they understand the difference between right and wrong and know the nature and quality of their criminal acts. Despite the power of their fantasies and their strong desire to dominate, they are capable of controlling their impulse to kill but choose not to do so (420). According to the authors, the most common psychological diagnoses of serial killers are antisocial personality disorder (psychopaths) and borderline personality disorder (420). Anyone suffering from Antisocial personality disorder is a classic sociopath who lacks remorse or empathy. Borderline personality disorder is marked by a pattern of instability in mood, relationships, and self-image. The behavior of the individual with borderline personality disorder includes impulsivity, intense anger, and chronic feelings of boredom (*American Psychiatric Association DSM-5* 301.83).

Fox and Levin, as mentioned in their article, have also offered a physical description of the victims of serial killers who tend to be white female and either very young or very old. Law enforcement and criminal profilers have also indicated that the average age of serial killers, when they commit their first murder, is twenty-five. This victim profile is prevalent among sexually motivated murders (424). In addition, serial killers typically prey on the most vulnerable targets: prostitutes, drug dealers, hitchhikers,

children, and the elderly who are stigmatized as “high risk” (individuals who are not valued by society or family) victims by law enforcement.

The last critical component of Fox and Levin’s study was the apprehension of the serial killer. The authors preface their argument with the unfortunate reality that many serial murders remain unsolved as they are the biggest challenge for law enforcement. Most serial killers are careful and clever, and to use the FBI’s typology, “organized” (425). Fox and Levin also found that serial killers are difficult to capture because their crimes lack motive and evidence (426). Many serial killers select strangers so that there appears to be no motive in the murder. The evidence is hard to obtain because organized murderers are experts in covering their tracks. In particular, Edmund Kemper kept most of the remains of his victims in his apartment before disposing of them. In sum, Fox and Levin conclude that serial killers are doing no more than chasing their dreams as they to make their life experiences a perfect fantasy (417). For the most part, serial killers live inside of their heads where they plan and organize their deeds. The actual murder occurs when the fantasy becomes a reality. In Kemper’s case, his fantasy became real when he finally murdered his mother.

In Fox and Levin’s article “Multiple Homicide: Patterns of Serial and Mass Murder” is their article “Normalcy in Behavioral Characteristics of the Sadistic Serial Killer,” which examines three pertinent topics regarding serial killers in an effort to delve deeper into the sociopathy of serial killers: a) presentation of self and what they feel that researchers have downplayed throughout the years, the existential processes; b) compartmentalization; and c) dehumanization. Levin and Fox share the belief that

compartmentalization and dehumanization permit serial killers to rape, torture, and murder with moral impunity (1). Many psychologists refer to normalcy in serial killers as impression management while Levin and Fox simply deem their normalcy as the presentation of self. They state that killers are seen as unusually capable of looking and acting beyond suspicion and appearing to be more innocent than a truly innocent person, so they can lure their victims (5). Fox and Levin mention Derrick Todd Lee (Baton Rouge serial killer) as a prime example. To many, Lee was friendly, charming, and hospitable.

He cooked barbeque for his friends and led a Bible study group at his church (5). Underneath Lee's hospitality and religious teachings, lay a cold-blooded killer. As well, Fox and Levin propose many individuals employ impression management or presentation of self to gain something such as a waitress in a restaurant. Fox and Levin illustrate that, in a restaurant, the wait staff may stage a scene in the dining area by their cordial and hospitable demeanor with customers in order to receive a handsome tip. Simultaneously, the same wait staff may enter the kitchen complaining about their experiences with customers. Hence, serial killers do the same thing except they do not use their impression management as a means to a "happy" ending (gaining something). Murderers only gain a willingness to torture and kill as a result of employing the tactic (6). While impression management is a tactic to compartmentalize their own actions and behavior, there is another tactic utilized to categorize the victims of murderers: compartmentalization.

Compartmentalization, according to Fox and Levin, is also necessary in order for serial killers to eradicate guilt or remorse. Fox and Levin also identify



compartmentalization that serial killers employ to hide behind the mask of normalcy. They define compartmentalization as a psychological facilitator that serial killers use to overcome or neutralize whatever pangs of guilt they might otherwise experience (6). Serial murderers are quite astute, as the authors suggest, in separating their circle of friends, whom they care about and treat with decency. Then, serial killers separate individuals with whom they have no relationship and therefore victimize with total disregard for their feelings. Most notably, Fox and Levin mention the Hillside Strangler, Kenneth Bianchi, who clearly divided the world into two camps: a) the individuals toward whom he had no feelings including the twelve women he brutally tortured and killed; and b) Bianchi's inner circle which consisted of his mother, his common-law wife, his son, and his cousin Angelo with whom he teamed up for the killings (7). In brief, Fox and Levin also argue that compartmentalization may be an extension of existential phenomena. In other words, serial killers show their families one "face," but their victims see another. Furthermore, as the authors write, an office executive might be a heartless "son of a bitch" to all his employees at work but a loving and devoted family man at home. Serial killers have jobs, families, do volunteer work, but also serve as part-time murderers (7). In their professional and social lives, serial killers possess the proclivity to be successful and upstanding citizens. Examples such as Dennis Rader ("BTK Killer") and Ted Bundy are often cited as "sophisticated criminals." Dennis Rader was the doting father of two, a city code inspector, and president of his church council at Christ Lutheran Church in Wichita, Kansas (Vronsky 38). Similarly, Ted Bundy received a psychology degree in 1972, served as driver and bodyguard to Arthur Fletcher (government official),

and a law student at the Utah College of Law (Vronsky 116-117). Behind their carefully constructed facades and seemingly normal lives lay an extremely dangerous murderer. Bundy once stated that society wants to believe it can identify evil people or bad or harmful people, but it is not practical. There are no stereotypes (qtd. in Vronsky 140). In essence, serial killers harbor aggressive tendencies while leading a professional life and turn to murder as an outlet for life's failures. The killers' ability to segment their loved ones from their prey also makes it easier for them to objectify or dehumanize their victims.

Fox and Levin expand on the serial killer's capacity to dehumanize others by regarding their victims as animals or demons who are therefore expendable (8). As Fox and Levin explain, the process of dehumanization entails serial killers who may view prostitutes as mere sex machines, gays as AIDS carriers, nursing home patients as vegetables, and homeless alcoholics as nothing more than trash. Fox and Levin found that by regarding their victims as subhuman elements of society, the killers can delude themselves into believing that they are doing something positive rather than negative. In their minds, they are ridding the world of filth and evil (8). These killers are dubbed as missionary murderers by the FBI. To conclude their study, the authors found that through the presentation of self (impression management), compartmentalization, and dehumanization, serial killers employ these tactics to satisfy their need to kill. Serial killers often turn to murder because they lack what it takes to achieve and satisfy their needs in a socially acceptable way (12).

Criminal profiler John Douglas, in his book, *Mind Hunter*, examines the psychological motivators of some of the most infamous serial killers in the United States: Edward Gein, Edmund Kemper, and Charles Manson. Douglas completed his study of some of history's most notorious murderers by creating their profiles using a simple formula: What? Why? and Who? According to Douglas, the crime scene is the psychological part of the killing (304). To put it another way, the crime and how it was committed to say a lot about the offender. As Douglas further explains, in order to establish the identity of the offender, the police must determine what took place at the crime scene. What is behaviorally significant about the crime? Why did it happen the way it did? Why was there mutilation, decapitation, or skinning of the victim involved? For instance, Edward Gein was mainly interested in corpse skin because he was trying to become his dead, domineering mother. In his book, Douglas concluded that serial killers like to sit at the head of the table of control. Manipulation, domination, and control are the watchwords of rapists and murderers. In other words, control over their victims is the primitive factor of their murderous quest.

Like John Douglas, Robert Ressler, in his book *Whoever Fights Monsters*, also provided several precipitating factors to murder. Ressler found that the true cause of serial murder is much deeper than Douglas' theory of control (13). Ressler specifically examines the childhood and adolescence stage of murderers such as Edmund Kemper III, John Wayne Gacy, Richard Chase, and Ted Bundy in his book. Ressler concluded that isolation is the most important part of the psychological makeup. In addition to isolation, Ressler found that acting out, daydreaming, compulsive masturbation, lying, bed-wetting,

and nightmare are early signs of violent and aggressive tendencies. Ressler argues that school systems and families fail children when they do not get to the root of their problems. Therefore, these traits can be treated if guardians and schools work to assuage their psychoses (93). Moreover, the quality of a child's attachment to others in their family is considered the most important factor in how they relate to others. Specifically, Edmund Kemper's mother scorned him and John Wayne Gacy ("The Killer Clown") was beaten and verbally abused by his father (86). Ressler further concludes that potential murderers become solidified in their loneliness during the ages of eight to twelve, for many of them are chronically disruptive, subdued, and withdrawn to the extent that no one paid them any attention (92). Ressler finalizes his theory on potential murders with distant mothers, absent/abusive fathers, and siblings, a non-intervening school system, ineffective social services, and the inability to relate sexually to others is the formula for producing a deviant personality (93). As a solution, Ressler states that maintaining and developing good interpersonal relationships begins in childhood and reinforced in preteen years. The operative theory of Ressler's book states that if good, personal relationships are not forged between children and their guardians, children will likely harbor resentment and anger. If they become murderers, by the time they are captured, the prognosis for rehabilitation is poor because problems have been developing since childhood (94).

In 2003, Harold Schechter also took on the challenge to explain the serial killing phenomenon in his book *The Serial Killer Files: The Who What Where How and Why of the World's Most Terrifying Murderers*. The first chapter of the book outlines the

characteristics of a serial killer and describes the warning traits and signs such as child abuse, mother hate, and fantasy just to name a few. After each trait, he provides a case study to provide examples of his assertions:

1. Child Abuse- Schechter finds that if a person is maltreated from his earliest years and subjected to constant psychological and physical abuse, he or she will grow up with a malignant view of life. To such a person, the world is a hateful place, where all human relationships are based, not on love and respect, but on power, suffering, and humiliation. When individuals are tortured by their earlier caretakers, they will, in later life, seek to inflict torture on others, partly as a way of taking revenge, partly because they have been so psychologically warped by their experiences that they can only feel pleasure by inflicting pain (257). The subject of Schechter's case study, regarding child abuse, was John Wayne Gacy ("The Killer Clown") and Edmund Kemper. Schechter emphasized that Gacy received nothing but humiliation from his father, who constantly belittled his masculinity in addition to regular beatings. Also, Edmund Kemper's mother ridiculed him relentlessly during his youth, mocking his physical appearance and telling him no woman would ever love him (259).
2. Mother-Hate- Schechter maintains that some serial killers are driven largely by mother-hate, and many of them grow up with murderous rage against their monstrously abusive mothers (260). Schechter illustrates the mother-hate trait with Henry Lee Lucas ("The One-Eyed Drifter) who stabbed his vicious

mother (Viola Lucas) to death during an argument in 1960 (261). Henry Lee Lucas once stated, “I hated all my life. I hate everybody. When I first grew up and can remember, I was dressed as a girl by my mother. And I stayed that way for two or three years. And after that, I was treated like what I call the dog of the family. I was beaten. I was made to do things that no human bein’ [sic] would want to do.”

3. Fantasy is also among Schechter’s case study in his book. Schechter insists that mental images of mayhem and rape are not the results of nightmares; on the contrary, they form the basis of his favorite daydreams. Far from trying to put such unwholesome thoughts out of his mind, he will cultivate them—wallow in them (262). To illustrate, Schechter, once again examined Edmund Kemper’s background. Schechter illuminates the words of Kemper, in an interview, when he admitted to fantasizing about killing his own mother. Kemper says, “I knew long before I started killing that I was going to be killing, that I was going to end up like that. The fantasies were too strong. They were going on for too long and were too elaborate (263). Schechter further discusses the twisted fantasies of serial killers at a young age. He compares the minds of killers (at a young age to other little boys). He then explains that while other little boys are daydreaming about scoring the winning run in a Little League game or becoming a member of X-men, these budding psychopaths are already lost in all-consuming reveries of sadism and mass murder (263). Schechter concludes his case study regarding fantasy by

asserting that serial killers live inside their heads, and they are locked within their own bizarre, pathological dream worlds (263).

Lastly, Schechter sifts through the lives and backgrounds of each serial killer (Charles Manson, Edmund Kemper, and Edward Gein, etc.) that fit each of the traits listed above. Schechter also includes a chapter that analyzes the factors behind the ending of their careers. The factors include capture, psychic help, suicide, confessions, and cold cases that traced particular murders to the serial killer. Schechter concludes that very few serial killers stop on their own. Instead, many are arrested or commit suicide.

Shirley Lynn Scott also explains the psyche of serial killers in “What Makes Serial Killers Tick? Monsters or Victims?; the author is extremely thorough in identifying the psychological prerequisites of the serial killer: mask of sanity, anonymity factor, adoption, psychopathy. Scott refers to the mask of sanity as the “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” factor or as novelist Robert Louis Stevenson calls it the “divided self.” Scott explains that serial killers appear civil and rational on the outside, but in truth, they are a wretched brute ready to break loose (Scott 7). In other words, they are abnormally normal. Scott employs the case of Henry Lee Lucas “The One-Eyed-Drifter” to exemplify her Jekyll and Hyde theory. Lucas once described being a serial killer as being a movie star. He reveals that serial killers are just playing the part (11). In the anonymity factor, Scott explains that serial killers can easily troll for victims among the forgotten. This includes runaways, prostitutes, drug addicts and the poverty-stricken. Scott further suggests that in the case of strangers, serial killers see others more as objects and less as humans (11). In the conclusion of her research, Scott answers a significant question that

has been asked by many: Can serial killers be reformed? According to the author, the answer is no. Research, to this point, has not been able to identify any rehabilitated serial killer. As an example, Scott mentions Carl Panzram as an example. Panzram once stated, “My only desire is to reform people who try to reform me. The only way to reform people is to kill them” (qtd. in *What Makes Serial Killers Tick: Monsters or Victims* 13). According to Scott, Panzram’s motto was: “Rob’em, rape’em, and kill’em all” (14). In sum, the only way that serial killers heal is to murder. Scott lastly concludes her study with the suggestion that serial killers lack a safety moral latch. Put plainly, people who murder have no regard for human life.

In 2009, Peter Vronsky provided substantive qualitative data regarding the different classes of serial killers in his book *The Definite History of the Phenomenon of Serial Murder: Serial Killers the Method and Madness of Monsters*. Vronsky begins his overview on serial murder with the following classification of serial killers in which he calls these categories the typology of “monstrosity”: a) Power/control-oriented: the most common of all. They enjoy torturing their prey and often find it sexually arousing; b) Visionaries: leave behind a chaotic crime scene. They also leave behind plenty of physical evidence. Sometimes, these offenders are nonfunctional in society; they live alone and have no contact with other people. Most visionary murderers suffer from mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. They also select their victims at random; c) Missionaries: these killers are often highly organized; they feel compelled to kill certain types of victims whom they believe are worthy of death. They believe that certain types of people such as prostitutes, homosexuals, prostitutes, homeless, and members of a



specific race deserve to die; d) Hedonistic: these individuals murder for financial gain. Vronsky refers to them as “comfort killers” because they also gain pleasure from mutilating or having sex with corpses, drinking their blood, and cannibalism. They also team up in groups and can be classified as cult serial killers; e) Geocentric killers lure victims to their place of residence or business. They are also nomadic killers who seek out their victims; f) Hedonist lust killers, according to Vronsky, are the scariest and most monstrous. Vronsky theorizes that not all of them want to hurt or kill. They just want to wear the skin, eat the liver, or have sex with the severed heads of their victims. The only problem is that the lives of their victims are in the way. They often have an ideal victim type such as footwear, clothing worn, hair color, or body shape; g) Hedonist thrill killers receive sadistic pleasure from the process of killing not from the actual killing. They often kill in an elaborate ritualized manner and receive pleasure from pain and suffering; h) Power reassurance killers plan to rape but murder is not planned. Their main motive is a conquest and fantasy, and their most common means of transportation is walking; and i) anger retaliation killers, in contrast to power assurance killers, plan both the rape and murder. They also use excessive violence as part of their modus operandi (139-201). Vronsky also reveals that serial killers often have explosive personalities and are obsessed with *Playboy* magazine (202).

As Vronsky strategically categorizes serial killers, he also hypothesizes that many of them adopt violent figures as their role models (241). For instance, Charles Manson was a fan of Adolf Hitler. Vronsky concludes, at the end of his book, that many serial killers kill because they feel disenfranchised, forgotten, and ignored in the looming

crowd. Psychopaths kill those who mirror their own forgotten anonymous identity but make a name for themselves and become “somebody “in the process (241). Vronsky further argues that serial killers are human black holes. They are normal, generic, invisible; they terrify us because they mirror us (241).

In *Why They Kill: The Discovery of a Maverick Criminology*, by Richard Rhodes, the author provides his most thoroughly studied findings on why people murder, and he dissects the reasoning behind the crimes. Rhodes begins his study with Lonnie Athens’ process of violentization (brutalization, belligerency, violent performances, and virulence). Athens himself, as Rhodes discusses, was a product of a violent household. Instead of Athens succumbing to the violence around him, he studied the psychopathology of individuals by interviewing criminals who were incarcerated for murder. According to Rhodes, violentization is a process that a person must go through in order to become a violent criminal. With this in mind, Rhodes believes that the following volatile elements can lead a person to murder: poverty, exposure to violence, and poor education. As Rhodes mentions, these stressors do not cause violence, but these situations can serve as the catalyst to begin the process of violentization (58).

In the book *Anatomy of Motive*, John Douglas and Mark Olshaker investigate the cause of sadistic and psychopathic behavior. Douglas and Olshaker contend that victimology is the first key to motive (4). Furthermore, the authors conclude that the motivation to kill is a desire for power and control that comes from a background where murderers feel powerless and out of control (28). For example, Edmund Kemper felt powerless because of his chaotic childhood. The authors suggest that the people serial

killers select as victims and why are pertinent questions in the capture of the perpetrator. Douglas and Olshaker provide insightful avenues in understanding the psychological state of some of the most notorious serial killers. Also important in motive is sexual fantasy (31). Douglas and Olshaker reflect on the cases of David Berkowitz “The Son of Sam,” and Ted Bundy “The Co-ed Killer.” As the authors write, Berkowitz developed resentment after he found out that he was adopted, whereas Bundy blamed his crimes on pornography (33). While most killers share the same motives and pre-crime stressors, there are different types of killers. Douglas and Olshaker provide a distinction between the different types of killers: serial, spree, and mass murderers. Serial killers constantly hunt humans for sexual thrill, and but they never expect to be captured by the police. Spree killers kill a number of victims at different locations in a short period of hours or days. Mass killers, on the other hand, play an endgame strategy because they do not expect to come out alive. The mass killer will either kill himself after he “makes his statement” or commit “suicide by cop” forcing a confrontation in which the police or SWAT team will have no choice but to kill him. The duo of criminal profilers also conclude that serial killers are made; they are not born evil (38). Most important, Douglas and Olshaker insist that individuals are responsible for what they do, so the crucial word in “motive” is choice (30).

While the works of the previous authors discussed so far focus on the psychological impairments and prerequisites of murder, Johnathan Pincus takes a medical approach in determining the recipe for a serial killer. In his book *Basic Instinct: What Makes Serial Killers Kill*, published in 2001, the neurologist explains that the frontal lobe

is the part of the brain that controls impulses of human beings, so if this is damaged, violence is inevitable, and they become very dangerous to society and possess a combination of impulses and drives that cannot be controlled. Pincus also insists that abuse can be a dominant force in serial killing, and he also affirms that if someone is badly abused, he or she may implode with anger for years and explode by killing. Pincus' primary focus is the family background of killers, childhood, and abuse. Pincus suggests that childhood abuse, neurological damage, and psychiatric illness are three contributing factors that create uncontrollable anger. In Pincus' book, he reports that of the one hundred and fifty people studied, ninety-four percent experienced severe physical and sexual abuse as children.

So far, this literature review has highlighted some of the main theories that explain serial murder. Moreover, there are specific offenders, both fictional and non-fictional who fit the psychological profiles that have been constructed by criminologists and psychologists featured in this study. Particularly, the first fictional subject of this dissertation is Macbeth who displays one of the psychological impairments (paranoid delusional disorder) in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In addition, he also has a key motive in his nefarious deeds—ambition. Thus, J. Hartwig's article "Macbeth, the Murderers, and the Diminishing Parallel" addresses the fact that Macbeth had no motive to murder Duncan except ambition. Hartwig mentions that Macbeth hires the murderers to kill Banquo, and they are willing to perform any deed either to spite the world or to mend their lives, but Hartwig's argument does not end there. The author continues to argue that Macbeth, in contrast to other serial killers when they kill their victims, has no vengeance

or spite in his heart when he kills Duncan, his first victim. Macbeth's case is just the opposite. He respects and admires king Duncan and can only come up with ambition as a cause for murder (39). Besides, Macbeth had to be manipulated by Lady Macbeth to kill Duncan at first. Macbeth did not want to kill the king, but his wife challenged his manhood as a result of his reluctance. As a remedy for his motiveless crime, Lady Macbeth, provides him with the necessity to murder Duncan. Lady Macbeth berates her husband as she questions his manliness for not wanting to commit murder (40). For this purpose, Macbeth's initial motive was not only ambition, but his wife's desperate desire to become queen of Scotland was also a motive.

As the plot unfolds in *Macbeth*, Macbeth transitions from the one persuaded to kill to the one who persuades, or as Hartwig suggests, Macbeth moves from actor to director throughout the play (40). The reason for this transition, as Hartwig argues, Macbeth fears discovery and death, so he can no longer act on his own; he must solicit other individuals who can carry out his deviant agenda on his behalf. In addition, Banquo's goodness is also a reason to have him murdered because Macbeth has estranged himself from goodness in murdering Duncan; now, in order to maintain himself, Macbeth must destroy his opposite (41). Macbeth now symbolizes evil, and Banquo symbolizes his opposite, which is good. In all, the primary focus of Hartwig's argument is that Macbeth, in contrast to other murderers, does not want to kill because he is left without the least justification for regicide, and he feels the lack of reason intensely (40). In other words, Hartwig argues that Macbeth is a criminal anomaly. While many other murderers possess psychological motivators such as child abuse, mother hate, brain

damage, etc., Macbeth does not show any signs of these impairments until he proceeds to murder Duncan.

Vincent Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter: The Shocking True Story of the Manson Murders* is noted for its exceptional and thorough account of the Tate-LaBianca murders, also known as "Helter Skelter murders." Bugliosi sheds light on Charles Manson, dubbed by law enforcement as the most disturbed man in American history and his cult as they fought to rise to power during the 1960s. Bugliosi provides detailed insight on the criminal ambition of Charles Manson and his "family," which led to a steady march towards an inevitable catastrophe of blood, death, and imprisonment. Manson's story, as told by the Los Angeles former district prosecutor, illustrates in its entirety, the conventional justice that was served to Manson and the co-defendants (Susan Atkins, Leslie Van Houten, Patricia Krenwinkel, and Charles Watson), in the form of an initial death sentence. Far more terrible, as Bugliosi mentions, is the lack of remorse that Manson and his followers displayed at their trial in 1971. Bugliosi recollects the laughter of the Manson girls after they were found guilty of nine counts of first-degree murder. Hence, Bugliosi's work provides good research on Manson and his co-conspirators in murder. Bugliosi concludes his detailed study of the case by revealing that even after his death sentence, Manson was still unbothered by the outcome of the trial, which was death by the gas chamber. This was very disturbing to Bugliosi. After the trial, Manson audaciously told Bugliosi that Judge Charles H. Older was only sending him home – prison that is (635).

In Nuel Emmons' *Manson in His Own Words*, the author focuses on three major components (rejection, mental illness, and paranoia) that may have led Manson to lead one of the most famous cults in U.S. history and mastermind one of the grisliest crimes in Los Angeles, California. Emmons (a former prison-mate of Manson) conducts a one-on-one interview with Manson focusing on his childhood as Manson shares the chilling details about his prison experiences and the downward spiral that led to the "Helter Skelter" murders. Manson shares that he had been rejected ever since birth and he had always been a half-assed nothing (24-26). In an attempt to address the origin of his hatred and resentment for society, Manson says that all he knew was jail. Also, he hated everything he saw after experiencing people turning their backs on him, so he did not trust anyone (49). Also significant was Manson's big blow out with his mother during her last prison visit to him. Emmons shares that Manson's mother (Kathleen Maddox) adopted a little girl, so this left him feeling slighted and more rejected (71). Manson further stated that he had two sons: one child never seen and the other known only as an infant. He claimed that his childhood experiences soured him on the meaning of family (109). As mentioned in the Introduction, during his stay at the Indiana School for Boys, Manson shared that he was raped by other boys, and the prison fields would tease him about the assaults. After his last prison release in 1967, before the Tate-LaBianca murders, Manson pleaded with prison officials to remain at Terminal Island. He said to Emmons that the streets were no place for him because he saw himself as a bogus bastard, and he was afraid to cope in a world he never understood (77). After his release, in 1967, Manson met Mary Theresa Brunner, (the first member of the Manson family) a

university librarian at the University of California. He described their relationship as a puppy and master relationship, which he enjoyed (96-98). As Emmons concluded his interview with Manson, he revealed that he wanted to give the world something to open their eyes by way of “helter skelter” (203). On the whole, Emmons endeavored to provide his readers with a microscopic view of Manson’s outlook on his own life and the reasoning behind some of his diagnosed personality disorders: paranoid delusional disorder, narcissism, anti-social personality disorder, and schizophrenia. Likewise, it can be inferred that Manson wanted the public to hear “his side” of the story by utilizing his old friend from jail, Nuel Emmons, as the liaison between him and the public audience.

In the case of gender dysphoria, exhibited by Jame Gumb (*The Silence of the Lambs*) and Edward Gein, there are a few works that provide an explanation to the origin and symptoms of their disorder. One of the most noted works on this subject is “Gender Dysphoria and Transsexualism” by George R. Brown, M.D. In his research, Brown thoroughly defines gender dysphoria as a strong, persistent cross-gender identification, which is the desire to be or the insistence that one is the opposite sex. The other is that there must be evidence of persistent dissatisfaction about one’s assigned sex. The author contends that, in males, cross-gender identification is manifested by a preoccupation with traditional female activities such as wearing makeup, heels, and dresses (2). According to Brown, transsexualism is the most extreme form of gender dysphoria. The author also clarifies the notion that sex and gender are not synonymous (1). Sex, according to Brown, refers to a person’s biological status: male, female, or intersex. In contrast, gender is the public expression of which gender one belongs (2). Brown segments his study into six



categories: a) the definition of the term; b) the etiology; c) signs and symptoms; d) treatment; and e) a brief discussion on transsexualism, which psychiatrists have noted as the most extreme form of gender dysphoria.

Brown deems it important to reveal the cause of gender dysphoria. The etiology of gender dysphoria, as Brown suggests, is that gender roles are influenced by biological (genetic complement and prenatal hormonal milieu) and social (the character of the individual's parents and their relationship with their parents) (3). In addition to the causes of gender dysphoria, if sex labeling and rearing are confusing (e.g. ambiguous genitals) this can lead children to become uncertain about their gender identity or role. According to Brown, the presence of ambiguous genitals may not affect a child's gender identity development.

In his study, Brown shares some of the most conspicuous signs and symptoms of gender dysphoria: a) a person may prefer cross-dressing, insist they are the opposite sex, wishing they would wake up as the other sex; b) prefer participating in the stereotypical games and activities of the other sex; and c) have negative feelings about their genitals (4). Brown shares a detailed example, in his research, concerning the signs of gender dysphoria: A young girl may insist that she will grow a penis and become a boy, and she may also stand to urinate. Also, a boy may sit to urinate and possess an extreme wish to be rid of his penis and testes (4).

In the article "Silence of the Sexes: Gender Inversion in Johnathan Demme's *The Silence of the Lambs*," Megan Evans focuses on her premise that Jame Gumb struggles to feminize himself for self-acceptance. Evans classifies Gumb as a pseudo-transsexual

whose mental state and overall psychological state reflects Jacques Lacan's theoretical paradigm of the Mirror Stage. According to Lacan, the mirror stage is an identification, namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes as an image (24). So then, Lacan's theory explains Gumb's psychoses and behavior as Evans pinpoints in her article. Now, that Gumb has assumed his image as a woman, a transformation must take place by any means necessary. Evans further hypothesizes that it is not enough for Gumb to feel like a woman, but he wants to become a woman. Evans also discusses the fact that for "Buffalo Bill" to achieve a female body to accompany his feminine behavior, this goal threatens the lives of real women such as his female victims, *and* Clarice Starling (the protagonist of the novel) (25). Gumb's goals are life-threatening because he must kill women in order to transform to one on his own, and he must kill Starling before she kills him as this will put an end to his quest to becoming a woman. Evans lastly suggests that if Gumb attains the female form, and is able to deceive both men and women, barring them from realizing his biological sex, he will have redefined what it means to be female (25).

In Bruce Robbins' article "Murder and Mentorship: Advancement in *The Silence of the Lambs*," the author observes and analyzes the psychosis and mental state of Jame Gumb just as Megan Evans did in her article. Robbins, however, adds to Evans' assertion that Jame Gumb's psychosis is the result of provincial poverty. Like Starling, Robbins suggests that Gumb wants to change his life by refusing or subduing his "natural" sexuality. A would-be transsexual, he can hardly avoid echoing the woman (Starling) who is forced to desex or "resex" herself, to try to be a man in order to make a life for

herself in a man's world (74-75). Simply put, both Starling and Gumb suffer an identity crisis. Gumb is trying to assert his womanhood through transformation, and Starling is trying to attain a masculine side by proving herself to the men of the Behavioral Science Unit under the direction of Criminal profiler Jack Crawford. Robbins continues his argument with the indication that Starling and Gumb both play a crucial role in each other's success; neither can succeed while the other lives. While Clarice Starling desperately fights to overcome the barriers of patriarchy, she must put an end to Gumb's monstrous deeds in order to achieve full recognition by her boss, Jack Crawford. Also, if Gumb does not kill Starling, he cannot achieve his goal of womanhood (81).

Harold Schechter provides a meticulously researched and documented true story of one of America's most notorious murderers, Edward Gein, in his book in *Deviant: The Shocking True Story of Ed Gein, the Original Psycho*. Schechter provides a detailed biography of an introverted farmer and babysitter that was bound by his mother's domineering personality and gender dysphoria, which served as one of the psychological motivators that drove him onto committing callous acts of murder after her death. Schechter expands on Gein's simmering psychoses of hallucination (after the death of Mrs. Gein) and schizophrenia (diagnosed during his childhood) that led him into murdering two Wisconsin women (Mary Hogan and Bernice Worden) during the 1950s. Reportedly, Gein began to see visions of his deceased mother throughout the house. The author's primary argument is that Gein's social incompetence led him into incipient madness (20). Schechter believes that Gein's social incompetence evolved as the result of being attached to no other women than his mother. Schechter writes, in detail, about

Gein's isolating childhood at the behest of his verbally abusive mother. Mrs. Gein thought that her sons were too good to socialize with the rest of the world, so she kept them from others (19). Schechter, in his book, renders the most bone-chilling detail of who law enforcement dubbed as "The Butcher of Plainfield." This nickname is a testament to Gein's devious ability to transform his Wisconsin home into a playground of blood and grisliness.

Subsequent to Schechter's detailed background of Gein, the author also examines Gein's most extreme form of his psychological impairment, gender dysphoria. The author reveals that Gein's unnatural attachment to his dead mother caused his perverse feminine attitudes. In addition, Gein wished that he were a woman. According to the author, Gein purchased medical books and studied anatomy. He also thought about inquiring about a sex change or doing it himself (133). Gein's gender dysphoria was illustrated as a result of the evidence that was discovered by Plainfield's crime lab. According to Schechter, when Allan Wilimosky (Plainfield's crime lab specialist) discovered an old shoebox in Gein's house, in the box was nine vulvas (Gein used the vulvas to cover his penis), boxes of human noses, several pairs of skin puttees (leggings); these were meant to be worn as leggings and head integuments. Wilimosky also found Gein's mask collection which consisted of human facial skins that had been pulled from the skulls of nine women (80). Schechter reveals that these loathsome creations were meant to be worn by Gein as he attempted to convert to womanhood (79). To conclude his work, Schechter finds that Gein's motives for murder were hostility, sex, and a desire for a substitute for his mother in the form of a replica or body that could be kept indefinitely (188).

In Paula R. Feldman's research project titled "Probing the Psychological Mystery of Frankenstein," Feldman concentrates on several circumstances in the novel that necessitates scrutiny. First and foremost, the author suggests that Frankenstein is not repulsed by how the Monster looks but that he looks. In other words, Frankenstein was disgusted by his own reflection that he could not control. According to Feldman, Frankenstein is frightened by the anatomy of his creation, and he can no longer control the monster after he created it (2). Feldman also concerns himself with determining the Monster as Williams' murderer. Feldman raises the question, "How does he know anything about his creature's character, let alone that he is a murderer?" Feldman remarks that the answer lies in induction or deduction and Frankenstein's speculation is intuitive (3). Feldman proposes that the Monster is indeed seeking revenge on Frankenstein for neglect, and he will soon be a victim of his own creation. Frankenstein also employs the case of Elizabeth's murder as evidence of Frankenstein's deviance. Feldman notes that Frankenstein puts his wife in danger, on their wedding night even after the Monster told him that he would also be present. In essence, the author believes that Frankenstein should have attempted to hide his wife from his doomed creation. Further, Feldman believes that Frankenstein marries Elizabeth to murder her (3). Feldman, in her article, uses the following quote uttered by Frankenstein to solidify her argument: "I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her, but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms..." (57). So then, Victor's kiss is the kiss of death

according to the author, for he is the coconspirator in his wife's fatality. Lastly, the author calls attention to the fact that the Monster is acting out what Victor is struggling to keep from consciousness. Feldman further proposes that Victor has achieved, through the Monster, his self-imposed isolation in Ingolstadt by repressing something in himself that the Creature embodies (68). It is evident that Frankenstein is struggling with a tainted self-image. When Frankenstein is first introduced, he is a self-determined scientist working diligently to manufacture life. As the novel progresses, the scientist catapults into a human being that is regretful as he struggles with inner turmoil. In short, the Monster's conflict is his physical image, and Frankenstein's conflict inward.

David Urizar's article, "The Real 'Monster' in *Frankenstein*," reinforces Paula Feldman's argument in her article "Probing the Psychological Mystery of Frankenstein." Urizar suggests that Frankenstein is the true serial killer in Mary Shelley's novel. Urizar also uncovers an interesting theory on the true perpetrator in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, that both Frankenstein and the monster are paranoid schizophrenics (20). In Urizar's article, he gives the definition of this mental illness provided by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder as the preoccupation with one or more delusions or frequent auditory hallucinations. Further, Urizar highlights the fact that Frankenstein is treated as if he is mentally ill throughout the story (21). According to Urizar, it could be possible that Victor's companions believe that Victor made up the monster to avoid being blamed for the death of his wife and the others, so Frankenstein's sanity is in question (22). The author uses the instance when Frankenstein is institutionalized for being made to bear witness to his theory of Frankenstein's mental

illness and his social withdrawal. Lastly, Urizar suggests that Frankenstein creates the monster as a coping mechanism and to understand his own internal struggle that is starting to arise in his mind. Because Victor is always alone when the Monster appears, he argues that Victor is the true monster in Shelley's novel (23). To solidify his argument regarding Frankenstein being schizophrenic, Urizar proposes that the Monster could be a figment of Victor's imagination as his creation only appears when his creator is alone. This explains, as Urizar argues, why no one else ever sees Victor and the Monster alive in the same room together. In sum, the author postulates that Victor and the Monster are the same people also because the language of the two characters is similar throughout several parts of the story. For example, both Victor and the Monster describe themselves as a "miserable wretch" (26). In short, Urizar hypothesizes that it is Victor's alter ego that commits the murders of William, Henry, and Elizabeth in the novel and his schizophrenia that serve as the psychological facilitator.

Joyce Carol Oates challenges both arguments of Feldman and Urizar in her article "Frankenstein's Fallen Angel." In her work, Oates vilifies Frankenstein for his loathsome creation, but she does not label him as the real murderer. Oates stresses that Frankenstein is not the real monster, but only the creator in which Victor must take responsibility, but he does not. The author further states that Frankenstein is not a mad scientist or genius but a highly idealistic and naïve youth in the conventional Romantic mode (548). Oates' argument supports Frankenstein's innocuous intentions to create something that he would be proud of instead of being afraid. Oates further reveals that Frankenstein is well-intentioned with his creation, which is gentlemanly good; however, Frankenstein's

behavior is preposterous, even idiotic, because he seems blind to the fact that he has created a fearful power into the world. He must take responsibility, but he does not (546). Oates also finds that the Monster's crimes were inevitable since the creature is made up of parts collected from charnel houses and graves, so he cannot be blessed or loved. Thus, according to Oates, the Monster has been forged in what Frankenstein calls a workshop of filthy creation (550). As a result of being constructed out of dead bodies, the Monster has no other choice but to be a source of evil and death himself.

In Jack Rosewood's Edmund Kemper: *The True Story of the Co-ed Killer: Historical Serial Killers and Murderers*. Rosewood's account of Kemper's life is particularly horrifying because it provides specific detail of a sadistic murderer who took pleasure in beheading his victims and often used their remains for sexual pleasure including his own mother. Kemper's sadism is exhibited in his necrophilia actions after he butchers his victims that consist of ten females, which led to his conviction on murderer charges. According to Rosewood, Kemper's victims included his grandmother, his mother (Clarnell Kemper), her best friend, and other coeds in Santa Cruz, California. The most perplexing of Kemper's story is that all who knew him called him "a gentle giant." Kemper also had a very high IQ level that denoted his near genius status. His wit and cleverness enabled him to manipulate others, which made him particularly dangerous and undetectable. Rosewood also shares insight on Kemper's unfortunate background with his mother who constantly scorned him with her vituperative verbiage. Hence, the variables of anger and resentment, according to Rosewood, led him to act on his fantasy to end the lives of at least ten women.



In Margaret Cheney's *The Co-Ed Killer: A Study of the Murders, Mutilations, and Matricide of Edmund Kemper III* also known as "Big Ed," the author provides insightful details on the crimes of Edmund Kemper based on his detailed confessions and interviews. Cheney describes how Kemper spent his time after he was incarcerated after the murder of his grandparents. Kemper's incarceration period, as many law enforcement officials call it, is the "cooling off" or "heating up" period for serial killers. According to Cheney, Kemper did not kill anyone, for a few years, after his five-year stay in a psychiatric hospital. But the awakening of the sleeping giant occurred in 1972 and lasted to 1973 when Kemper murdered six women in Santa Cruz, California. Cheney provides grim detail of his last murders, which included his mother and her best friend on April 20, 1973. Cheney also provides detail of Kemper's trial where he requested his own fatal demise, the death penalty, but was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole.

B.F. Skinner, psychologist, and behaviorist, provides explanations of the causalities of violent crime—abuse, neglect, mother hate, and brain injury. In his book *Beyond Freedom & Dignity*, the chief premise of Skinner's oppositional discourse, to other psychologists and criminologists regarding free will, is that a person who commits a crime has no real choice. Free will is dismissed, in this work, as the real causes of human behavior. Skinner argues that humans behave because of environmental circumstances and personal history, which make breaking the law natural and inevitable (21). So then, Skinner found, in his study, that the behavior of individuals also lies in physical and psychological reinforcers and punishments. Thus, in his analysis of human behavior, Skinner suggests that a person is responsible for his behavior, not only in the sense that

he may be justly blamed or punished when he behaves badly, and humans should also be justly rewarded for their accomplishments and achievements (20-21). Lastly, Skinner believes that people who kill (specifically serial murderers) have no control over their murderous impulse.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation opposes Skinner's theory of environmental determinism as the precursor to murder. Abuse, neglect, mother hate, and brain injury may serve as pre-crime stressors but do not justify murder according to the FBI. The FBI suggests that the only single causality of serial murder is free-will. Free will is the idea that a person is able to have some choice in how they act and are free to choose their behavior. In "Serial Murder Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators," composed by the Behavioral Analysis Unit National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, criminal profilers, in the Behavioral Analysis Unit, assert that serial killers, like all humans, are the products of their heredity, their upbringing, and choices they make throughout development. The FBI does agree, however, with the premise of other psychological and criminologists that it is not possible to identify all factors that influence an individual to murder (11). Further, there is no single identifiable cause or factor that leads to the development of someone as a serial killer. The most significant factor, according to the FBI, is the serial killer's personal decision in choosing to pursue their crimes (12). In brief, the FBI concludes that serial killers decide to murder because they are self-determined in doing so.

Social psychologist and psychoanalyst Erich Fromm would concur with the FBI's premise regarding free will with an added viewpoint. Fromm prefaces his argument, in

his book *Escape from Freedom*, with a Talmudic proverb that states, “If I am not myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself only, what am I? If not now—when?” Fromm argues that many people have the potential to control their own lives but many of them are just simply *afraid* to do so (12; emphasis added). Fromm further states that people give up their freedom and allow themselves to be governed by circumstance, other people, political ideology, or irrational feelings (6). In short, Fromm’s argument may be said to depict the lives of serial killers. Serial killers are just individuals who are in fear of taking control of their own lives and utilizing their circumstances as an excuse to inflict pain and suffering upon their victims.

Many law enforcement and medical professionals have confronted the psychological, biological, and neurological causalities of serial murder in their research and experiments. This literature review outlines and summarizes past and present theoretical speculations regarding the psychological motivators of murder. To add, this literature review has: a) summarized the works that address some of the psychological stressors and social influences such as paranoid personality disorder, gender dysphoria, and self-hate that may lead an individual to commit murder b) examines the research of the scholars who have studied serial murder to gain clarity on what makes serial killers tick; and; c) focuses on the lives and pre-crime stressors of both the literary and real-life murderers that are highlighted in this research.

Many of the authors focus on the upbringing of the serial killers that are featured in this study as the primary source of their crimes while others place the responsibility for the crimes on brain damage, mental illness, peer rejection, mother hate, etc. As

mentioned earlier in this study, there is no single, absolute template for serial murder.

Instead, current researchers and the FBI have found that free will and the killers' personal decision are the real factors that make a serial killer. Nonetheless, this dissertation seeks to explore the similarities between fictional and nonfictional serial killers, compare and contrast their Modus Operandi, and finally discuss the consequences of their personal choice to murder their victims.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE CASE OF PARANOID DELUSIONAL DISORDER IN MACBETH AND CHARLES MANSON

This chapter examines the psychological facilitator of paranoid delusional disorder that motivated the crimes of Macbeth and his real-life counterpart Charles Manson. To better understand how Macbeth and Charles Manson committed their callous deeds as a result of paranoia, the definition of paranoid delusional disorder by the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* is very instructive. The manual defines paranoid delusional disorder as the false beliefs based on incorrect inference about external reality that persists despite the evidence to the contrary. The beliefs, according to the *DSM*, are not ordinarily accepted by other members of the person's culture or subculture. Furthermore, the *DSM* characterizes paranoid delusional disorder into five categories: a) persecutory, which is the belief that one is going to be harmed by an individual, organization or group, and gestures, comments, or environmental cues are directed at oneself; b) grandiosity, the belief that the individual has exceptional abilities, wealth, or fame; c) erotomania false belief that other individuals are in love with him or her; d) nihilistic, a conviction that a major catastrophe will occur; and e) somatic beliefs focused on bodily sensation or function (*DSM-5* 297.1 F22).

In Macbeth and Manson's cases, both feared that they were going to be harmed

and persecuted as a result of their crimes. Macbeth feared destruction at the hands of the citizens of Scotland, and Manson believed that African Americans were going to destroy European Americans. He also feared going back to prison. As a result of their perilous and bloated delusions, the two murderers developed a sense of grandiosity, which is common among serial killers. Towards the end of the play, Macbeth, as a result of the witches' prophecy, believe that no man born of a woman could harm him. Given these similarities, their sense of invincibility and grandiosity signals an additional aspect of their psychosis, which is paranoia and a weakness. Manson admits to his grandiosity in Noel Emmons' book *Manson in His Own Words: The Shocking Confessions of The Most Dangerous Man Alive*. Manson remarks that boldness and aggression is sometimes just an effort to hide fear, weakness, and doubt (130). Similarly, Manson exhibited his grandiose demeanor by calling himself Jesus Christ or "Man's Son." In order to convince his followers that he was the Messiah, Manson would often reenact the crucifixion of Jesus.

In Manson's case, he felt that the Beatles' song "Helter Skelter" was a revelation that the world was coming to an end, and the African Americans were going to rise up and destroy their oppressors, the white race. In this chapter, a range of exemplars will be used to illustrate the fact that Macbeth and Manson's paranoia served as the genesis of their crimes, while they also manipulated others to murder on their behalf. The Federal Bureau of Investigation refers to murder on someone else's behalf as murder by proxy. This confluence of factors shaped the murderous quest of Shakespeare's Macbeth ("The King Killer") and hippie cult leader Charles Manson ("The Killer Guru").

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, endowed with tragedy and consternation, emerges from the protagonist's aspiration of becoming the king of Scotland. His tragedy also brews in his failed relationships and his reactions to the temptation of usurping the crown from his relative king Duncan. When Macbeth is first introduced, he has gained notoriety for fighting on his country's behalf. He is dubbed Scotland's hero after defeating Ireland and Norway in battle and has executed Macdonwald, the current Thane of Cawdor. Afterward, an unnamed captain has informed king Duncan of Macbeth's heroic deeds, telling him that Macbeth has split the body of Macdonwald:

CAPTAIN. Not pausing to shake hands or say goodbye, Macbeth split

Macdonwald from belly to jaw and stuck his head on the walls of our

castle. (1.2.36-38)

Because Macbeth destroyed Duncan's enemy, he receives a royal promotion from Thane of Glamis to Thane of Cawdor from King Duncan, and at the behest of Duncan, Macbeth's predecessor, Macdonwald is executed for conspiring with Norway to invade Scotland. Macbeth's promotion was also one of the witches' prophecies to which he and his wife (Lady Macbeth) strongly consider. The witches also prophesized that Macbeth will become king of Scotland. Yet to the chagrin of Macbeth, his goal of becoming king has been interrupted by Duncan, at his castle (Inverness), as Duncan announces that his son Malcolm is next in line to the throne of Scotland. This occurrence is the first clue of Macbeth's transition from an honorable warrior to a cold-blooded murderer. After the battle, Macbeth composes a letter to his wife describing the prophecies of the witches, and she immediately becomes excited about becoming the queen of Scotland by *any*

means necessary. So, Lady Macbeth suggests that Macbeth murder Duncan, so he can become king of Scotland. At first, Macbeth is indeed dubious to his wife's homicidal suggestion as he states:

MACBETH. I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting  
ambition Which o'er leaps itself. And falls on the other. (1.7.25-28)

Macbeth's words are indicative of his irresolution to murdering the king. Thus, it is evident that Duncan's murder would be motiveless to Macbeth as he maintains his belief that murdering the king would be the opposite of what his job really is and that is to protect Duncan and not bear the knife. Furthermore, Macbeth aspires to remain Duncan's loyal servant and relative. In the words of Macbeth, ambition is his only incentive to murdering Duncan in which he *does* take action. Therefore, Lady Macbeth lures he husband with the insistence that the only solution to becoming the benefactors of Duncan's death. Lady Macbeth says:

LADY MACBETH. What beast was't then that made you break this enterprise to  
me? When you durst do it, then you were a man. . . (1.7.52-54)

Here, Lady Macbeth insists on pricking Macbeth's conscience as she expresses the assumption that her husband would have easily killed Duncan when her husband was a real man. She further reveals her murderous proclivities and her violent disposition by admitting that she would murder King Duncan herself, if not for the truth that he resembles her father as he sleeps:

LADY MACBETH. Alack, I am afraid they awaked and 'tis not done. And tis not  
done. The attempt and not the deed confound us. Hark! I laid their daggers



ready; He could Miss'em. He had not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't. (2.2.12-16)

Macbeth's strident disbelief in committing his first murder was eventually reversed when he finally falls prey to his wife's cajolment and proceeds with the slaying of Duncan as the king of Scotland sleeps in the castle of Inverness (Macbeth's castle). He gives in to his wife's persuasion because he now realizes that he must create his own fate by removing the other royal prospects (Banquo's heirs and Macduff) who are obstructions to his goal. August Knoll, in his article titled "Criminal Types in Shakespeare," notes that Macbeth's mental decline was present before he murdered Duncan. He states, "They fall before temptation, and it is not wickedness, but weakness, that is the defect of their character. That is why crime becomes a great catastrophe in their lives" ("Criminal Types in Shakespeare" 646). To extend this line of argument, it can be said that in order to be persuaded to commit murder, weakness was already part of Macbeth's pathology. His weakness explains his mental breakdown after he bludgeons Duncan to death because murder is not his forté. The firm implication can also be made that Lady Macbeth is only affirming Macbeth's deepest desire, which is kingship, but Macbeth is too weak to commence with murder on his own even though he still murders King Duncan, the king's guards, Macdonwald, ordered the murders of Macduff's family, and Young Siward. As a result, Lady Macbeth provides the emotional push that he needs in order to fulfill his desire.

Because of Macbeth's weakness to control or fight against his wife's ambition, he proceeds to commit seven counts of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit

murder. His victims include Young Siward, Duncan, Duncan's two guards, Banquo, Lady Macduff, and Macduff's son. The victimology in Macbeth's murders suggests that Macbeth selects powerful individuals, or their heirs as his targets because they represent what he wants. In the article "Multiple Homicide: Patterns of Serial and Mass Murder," James Fox and Jack Levin observe that victims of serial killers are chosen because of what they supposedly have done or what they represent to the killer (438). In Macbeth's case, all of his victims (Duncan, Banquo, and Macduff's family) represent what he covets and desires, which is kingship and power. In this case, there is a critical connection between Macbeth's guilt, fear, and paranoia, which becomes an impediment to his relationships with others because he has unlawfully obtained his crown by way of murder.

King Duncan's murder is the turning point of Shakespeare's play; it is catastrophic because unlike many other serial killers who do not possess any remorse or guilt, Macbeth is now fearful, paranoid, and suspicious of everyone including his best friend Banquo. Now, his paranoia serves as a detriment to all of his relationships. The particular factors of Macbeth's paranoia and fear of Banquo emerge when Banquo expresses his suspicion of Macbeth:

BANQUO. Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all, As the weird women promised, and I fear thou played'st most foully for't. Yet it was said it should not stand in thy posterity, but that myself should be the root and father of many kings. If there come truth them . . . (3.1.1-4)

The semantics of Banquo's words indicate his suspicion of Macbeth as Duncan's killer, especially when Banquo states that Macbeth used foul play for his promotion to king's status. Banquo suspects foul play in the murder of Duncan, and he communicates this to his good friend Macbeth. Already in this revelation lies Macbeth's fear of Banquo as he tells his servants that he is indeed afraid of Banquo:

MACBETH. Our fears in Banquo stick deep, and in his royalty of nature reigns  
that which would be feared. 'Tis much he dares, and to that dauntless  
temper of his mind he hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor. (3.1.53-57)

Nonetheless, ambition has woven together a situation of violence, greed, paranoia, and distrust towards everyone in whom Macbeth's life is intertwined. His paranoia has produced an urge to inflict harm and death upon those he once trusted and vice versa. Due to his state of paranoia, a great deal of dissension between Macbeth and his friends draws on a grave multitude of distrust. For this reason, he has strategically placed spies in each home of Scottish lords to report back to him. This act of spying emphasizes his fear of losing his position as leader. He says:

MACBETH. I hear it by the way; but I will send. There's not a one of them but in  
His house I keep a servant fee'd. (3.4. 155-157)

Because murder is foreign to Macbeth, he is not privy to what should happen next, with regards to his fate, so he solicits the help of spies in order to keep him abreast of possible conversations featuring him as the topic.

In the play, there is also scant evidence of Macbeth's paranoia as it is exemplified at his banquet at Inverness in a conversation with the other Thaness; he begins hearing

voices and seeing images. At his banquet, Macbeth begins to see the ghost of Banquo, and this is where he delves deeper into his paranoid state:

MACBETH. The table's full.

LENNOX. Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH. Where?

LENNOX. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?

MACBETH. Which of you have done this?

LORDS. What, my good lord?

MACBETH. Thou canst not say I did it; never shake thy gory locks at me.

ROSS. Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well. (3.4)

One of the most poignant observations of Macbeth's paranoia is his inability to enjoy his new ill-begotten gain as king of Scotland. The disintegration of Macbeth's excitement is symbolic of what French psychiatrist Philip Gorwood labels as Anhedonia. Gorwood argues that depression and schizophrenia are the main proponents in paranoia. In his article, "Neurobiological Mechanisms of Anhedonia," Gorwood defines Anhedonia as the reduced ability to experience pleasure, and it has also been the most extensively studied condition in major depression and schizophrenia (292). Undoubtedly, the representation of Macbeth's paranoia caused him to be in a constant state of inner turmoil and conflict with himself and others, which inhibits him from enjoying his second promotion as the new king of Scotland.

As the play progresses, Macbeth struggles to maintain his pretense of innocence, while his every fantasy and action brim with murder and his grandiose feelings of

entitlement to being king, so Macbeth struggles to keep his mask of contentment and innocence in place. The continued exhibition of his paranoia bears witnesses to his psychological wounds that continue to exacerbate, especially at his banquet that Macbeth hosts after he becomes king. In order to flaunt his power, Macbeth invites his friends to his castle in order to ingratiate himself as Thane of Cawdor. He also claims that Banquo will be his chief guest. Social psychologist Edward E. Jones (the father of Ingratiation) defines this psychological tactic as ingratiation. In his book *Ingratiation: A Social Psychological Analysis*, Jones defines ingratiation as a persuasive technique which people use to appear more amiable to another person or group so that they might accept them or comply with their requests (8). Macbeth attempts to feign friendliness in order to hide his ghastly acts of violence in an attempt to appear hospitable, noble, and good-natured to his servants.

Macbeth's transgressions leave him in a state of melancholy. The once honorable general has become enslaved to his own greed and mental impairment, while irrational suspicion has also resulted in his hallucinations. Additionally, Macduff's absence also exacerbates Macbeth's mental condition. Macbeth deduces that Macduff knows that he is Duncan's killer. In Act IV, an apparition warns him to beware of Macduff.

FIRST APPARITION. Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff, Beware the Than of Fife. (4.1.78-79)

As a result of what Macbeth sees, Macbeth's paranoia is now at its zenith. Macbeth labels Macduff as a traitor because Macduff does not attend his coronation as the new king of Scotland, so he too must be murdered. More importantly, Macduff is also an obstruction

to his career ambition as ruler of Scotland. After Lady Macbeth witnesses her husband's state of paranoia, she dismisses their guests from their castle because the seat that is next to her husband is mounted by the ghost of Banquo. Macbeth says:

MACBETH. Our fears in Banquo stick deep, and his royalty of nature reigns that  
which would be feared. Tis much he dare, and, to the dauntless temper of  
his mind. (3.1.53-56)

After Macbeth exhibits his psychological state of extreme fear, Macbeth's oral posturing of his paranoia is thronged with the intricacies of his fear towards Banquo. Now, Macbeth is terrified enough to hire murderers to slay his friend because he feels that Banquo and his heirs are a danger to his throne and therefore need to be killed. To understand the nature of Macbeth's distrust towards Banquo, the witches previously revealed that his heirs would be future kings of Scotland. This prophecy displeases Macbeth.

Joan Hartwig, in her article "Macbeth, the Murderers, and the Diminishing Parallel," contends that Banquo's goodness may have spurred feelings of frustration in Macbeth because he has now disassociated himself from goodness. She writes, "Banquo's goodness is a reason for his death because Macbeth has estranged himself from goodness in murdering Duncan; now in order to maintain himself, Macbeth must destroy his opponent. Besides, Banquo shares the prophecy with Macbeth and fathers the crown's successors" (41). Busied with sustaining his position as king, by way of murder, Macbeth is also torn and preoccupied with the thoughts of being murdered as well, so he has no choice but to destroy everyone he believes will oppose his position as ruler and

eventually kill him. This also paralyzes his thinking and his own good nature, which permits him to inflict death on others until his own. As mentioned earlier, he believes that if he is discovered as Duncan's true killer, he will suffer fatal consequences for his callous acts. For this reason, Macbeth's motive for the murder has shifted from mere ambition to fear and paranoia, which is evident in the subsequent murders (Banquo and the family of Macduff).

While Macbeth displays his paranoia after committing murder, Lady Macbeth undergoes a transformation as well. She shifts from the wife of the newly-installed Thane of Cawdor to the brutal co-conspirator of murder in the play. As a result of her and her husband's murderous schema to the ascent of the throne of Scotland, she too experiences a mental deterioration which leads to her suicide in act five. The first sign of Lady Macbeth's paranoia is the incessant washing of her hands:

LADY MACBETH. All the perfumes of Arabia won't sweeten the smell of my  
little hand. (5.1.44-46)

Psychological scientist Reuven Dar observes the significance of Lady Macbeth's compulsive washing of her hands in his article "Guilt and Cleanliness." Dar states:

The compulsive washer has become a symbol of the human mind's deep connection between morality and cleanliness—and between immortality and filth ... Immortal thoughts and memories can indeed put the mind into a state of mental contamination—a condition that the actual physical act of washing might undo. (1)

Dar labels the constant washing of the hands as the “Lady Macbeth Effect.” The author further concludes that Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a sign of paranoia which Lady Macbeth exhibits after Duncan’s murder. Hence, both share the paranoia and fear of being apprehended and executed for their crimes. It is then appropriate to label their psychosis as *folie á deux* as noted in chapter one. The shared psychosis of the “gruesome twosome” (Macbeth and his wife) further shape their distorted method (murder) of becoming the rulers of their country. *Folie á deux* is a shared psychotic disorder which has delusional symptoms in the partner of an individual with the same delusional disorder. Coupled with this definition, psychologist Steve Bressert says the essential feature in *folie á deux* is a delusion that develops in an individual who is involved in a close relationship with another person (sometimes termed the “inducer” or the “primary case”) (“Shared Psychotic Disorder Symptoms” 1). Additionally, their shared psychosis also serves as the genesis of the crimes that are committed in Shakespeare’s play as they are conspirators in murder.

The subsequent murderous deeds that are carried out after Duncan’s murder are what law enforcement refers to as proxy murders. The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines proxy murder as a type of murder in which the murderer commits the act under the orders of another, acting as his or her proxy (hence the name). Murder by proxy is essential to Macbeth’s reign of terror because he is desperately attempting to escape blame for the bloodbaths that occur. It is seen, then, that Macbeth hires and manipulates three murderers to commit the subsequent murders after he murders Duncan himself in act one. In Macbeth’s desire to have Banquo killed, he convinces the murderers that all of



their hardships should be attributed to Banquo, and they are no fault of his. Macbeth states:

Have you considered of my speeches? Know that it was he, in the times past, which held you so under fortune, which you thought had been our innocent self. This I made good to you. In our last conference, passed in probation with you, how you were borne in hand, how crossed the instruments, who wrought with them, and all things else that might to half a soul and to a notion crazed say, "Thus did Banquo." (3.1.81-90)

Clearly, Macbeth is adroitly condemning his own friend for the sake of maintaining his position as king, which is Banquo's death. He successfully proselytizes the killers into believing that they are Banquo's victims. It can be observed that Macbeth's plot is to rid the murderers of compassion and sympathy towards Banquo, so that they can murder Banquo without conscience or guilt. Macbeth manipulates the murderers into believing that Banquo is their true enemy. As a result, the murderers acquiesce to Macbeth's wily incrimination of Banquo:

SECOND MURDERER: I am one, my liege, whom the vile blows and buffets of the World. Hath so incensed that I am reckless what I do to spite the world. (3.1.117-120)

The first also murderer complies with Macbeth and the second murderer when he states:

FIRST MURDERER. And I another so weary with disasters, tugged with fortune, that I would set my life on any chance, to mend it or be rid on't. (3.1.123-126)

Again, through Macbeth's cunning manipulation, the words of the murderers indicate that they will, by any means necessary, avenge their misfortune for which Macbeth fallaciously blames Banquo.

In Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine's book, *More About Macbeth*, the authors explain the reason behind the proxy murders in the play. According to the authors, Macbeth's later victims (after Duncan) are done by proxy, in an attempt to create more distance between the destruction he wills and the full psychic awareness of his responsibility (25). Now that Macbeth has alienated himself from others out of paranoia and to avoid suspicion, he must somehow forge alliances with other villainous subordinates to perform his "dirty work." In addition to Macbeth's transformation from the actor of murder to the director of murder, he also transforms from the one being manipulated (by his wife and the witches) to the manipulator. The malevolent Lady Macbeth successfully controls the mind and heart of her once timid husband as she incited him into a world of crime that he cannot escape, so he must also manipulate others. As a result, he allies himself with felonious, beleaguered murderers in order to manipulate them into murderous allegiance.

Macbeth's assemblage of murderers is also manipulated into committing murder via appeals to their manhood, which is similar to the instigative language of Lady Macbeth in act one when she challenges her husband's masculinity as he expresses his uneasiness about killing Duncan. Macbeth utilizes the same schema to propel the murderers into action by challenging them to become a more violent breed of men:

MACBETH. Not I'th worst rank of manhood, say't, And I will put that business  
 into your bosoms, whose execution takes your enemy off, grapples you to  
 the heart and love of us, who wear our health but stickly in his life, which  
 in his death were perfect. (3.1.111-116)

Because Macbeth challenged their manhood, the murderers became more willing to kill Duncan in order to prove their manhood. Macbeth also exploits the killers' perception of manhood by reminding them of their state of destitution and suggesting that murdering their oppressor is the only "manly" solution in this case. As act three comes to an end, Macbeth gives the assassins clear instructions on how to carry out their task while attempting to disassociate himself from a life of crime:

MACBETH. I will advise you where to plant yourselves, Acquaint you with the  
 perfect spy o'th' time, the moment on't, for't must be done tonight, and  
 something from the palace; always thought that I require a clearness. And  
 with him—to leave no rubs nor blotches in the work. (3.1.144-149)

In his discussion of Macbeth's hired murderers, Erin Connelly's article "Macbeth's Likely Suspects: The Practical, Psychological, and Mystical Utility of the Three Murderers," Connelly observes that Macbeth's use of the murderers allows him to bridge the chasm between the need for Banquo's eradication and the completed act of homicide. Connelly further observes that while Macbeth might lack the ability to carry out Banquo's murder, he places the task into the decisive hands of employees who act solely for that purpose (11). Because of this, Macbeth is not a murderer by nature, so he must solicit those who are. Out of narrative necessity, Shakespeare simply calls them

“murderers.” Their names (murderers) indicate that their lives encompass just that, murder. By contrast, Macbeth has everything (the throne of Scotland) to lose if he continues on his murderous rampage on his own. For this purpose, the three unnamed men are hoaxed by Macbeth into murder by proxy, and they meet Macbeth’s murderous expectations. Unfortunately, Macbeth’s tragic reign ends at the hands of Macduff, as he beheads him in act five. After Macbeth murders Duncan, he constantly questioned his own fate after usurping the throne of Scotland. He transitions from being an honorable warrior to a murderous, thug ruler soliciting criminal collaboration through the minefields of self-destruction and his dissention into unquenchable bleakness.

*Charles Milles Manson “The Killer Guru”*

On August 9, 1969, centuries after the tragedy of Macbeth, Charles Milles Manson carried the barbarous torch of his literary counterpart, Macbeth, by orchestrating one of the most brutal slayings in American history—the Tate-LaBianca murders also infamously known as the “Helter Skelter” slayings. Manson committed murder because, like his literary counterpart, he aspired to become the leader of his country as well. Like Macbeth, Manson also had a prophecy by way of the Beatles music group. As previously mentioned, Manson can be compared to Macbeth because both killers murdered out of paranoia delusional disorder; both murderers operated in folie á deux; and most bewilderingly, they coerced individuals to murder on their behalf. These types of killings are called murder by proxy or Antisocial Personality by Proxy, which is according to John Douglas et al, influencing criminality in others to avoid prosecution or penalty

(*Crime Classification Manual* 70). As Shakespeare set the stage for serial murder in the 1600s, via Macbeth, centuries later all eyes were on the Manson family trial as the result of the “Helter Skelter” slayings that claimed the lives of nine people under the directives of Charles Manson: Gary Hinman (stabbed and beheaded on July 31, 1969); Donald “Shorty” Shea (sliced from his armpit to his collarbone and stabbed repeatedly); Sharon Tate (stabbed sixteen times and one breast removed); Jay Sebring (exsanguination; stabbed seven times and shot once with one fatal gunshot wound); Abigail Folger (stabbed twenty-eight times); Wojciech “Voytek” Frykowski (shot twice; stuck over the head thirteen times with a blunt object; and stabbed fifty-one times); Steven Earl Parent (one defensive slash wound and shot four times); Pasquilino “Leno” LaBianca (twelve stab wounds; fourteen puncture wounds by a double-tuned fork with a total of twenty-six separate wounds with six being fatal; and Rosemary LaBianca (stabbed fourteen times; six could have been fatal) (*Helter Skelter* 58-77). As Bugliosi reveals, there was a total of one-hundred and sixty-nine stab wounds and seven gunshot wounds. Police also discovered, scrawled in their victims’ blood, “Healter [sic] Skelter” on the wall of the LaBiancas; “Rise” was also on the LaBianca’s refrigerator; and “Death to Pigs” was on the door of Sharon Tate. In a tête-à-tête with her cellmate, Susan Atkins, dubbed by police as Manson’s most brutal girl, told Virginia Graham that Charles Manson was Jesus Christ, and she further admitted to Graham that the family wanted to do something to gain the world’s attention (*Helter Skelter* 112).

While incarcerated for car theft, Atkins also confessed to the murder of Gary Hinman (a musician and educator). She further announced that the best was yet to come.

Their slay list also included: Elizabeth Taylor, Frank Sinatra, Tom Jones, Richard Burton, and Steve McQueen. More chillingly, Atkins audaciously described that she was going to heat a knife red-hot, place it on the side of Elizabeth Taylor's face, carve the words "helter skelter" on her forehead, and gouge her eyes out. Atkins continued that she would castrate Burton and place his penis in a bottle with Taylor's eye. Afterward, she would force Tom Jones to have sex with her, at knifepoint, and then, slit his throat as he climaxed. Lastly, she and her accomplices would hang Frank Sinatra from a meat hook and skin him alive while playing his own music. After flaying him, the Manson girls were going to make purses out of his skin and sell them in their hippie store, so everyone could have a piece of Frank Sinatra (*Helter Skelter* 488-489). As Bugliosi notes, Graham concluded that Atkins was completely nuts after this conversation. Two months after the murders, Graham told prison officers, "This crazy bitch just told me that she killed Sharon Tate!" (*Manson: The Notorious Crime and Trial Documentary*) Manson and his family's plight to go unforgotten was indeed successful. The "Helter Skelter" murderers became the cause célèbre of the twentieth century. Indeed, the world has not forgotten the psychopathic demagogue (Charles Manson) and his bandwagon of bedraggled brethren whose grisly murders brought this psychedelic era to its knees.

The 1960's, the time in which the murders occurred, was a decade of change and a critical turning point in American history. This decade was also a turning point for the economic equality and fundamental social injustice that befell African Americans. There were many significant occurrences that took place for the benefit of American citizens, especially African Americans: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X became the

faces of serenity and justice during the Civil Rights Movement; President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Creation of Medicare and Medicaid Act, and the Higher Education Act in 1965; Women's rights activists were also gaining a strong place in society; Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, and Elbert Howard founded the Black Panther Party in 1966 and the first man (Neil Armstrong) landed on the moon on July 20, 1969. In the midst of these positive occurrences, the grisly deeds of Manson's hippie bandwagon brought the 1960's to a bloody finale endowed with tumult and uproar that was spear-headed by a self-proclaimed nobody and bogus bastard. Manson inoculated his family into a seat at his intoxicating and violent table through drugs (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide/LSD, Mescaline, hashish, and marijuana), isolation, his contorted philosophies on "Helter Skelter" preaching, sex, and music. Unbeknownst to them, Manson had hopes of bringing a menu of paranoia, bigotry, unvarnished greed for power, and grisly murder as he had hopes of shaking up the world.

Charles Manson's mother (Kathleen Maddox) and his wife Rosalie Willis Manson's rejection provided the backdrop for Manson's paranoia and disdain for society in which he lived but could not function. In Nuel Emmons' book *Manson in His Own Words: The Shocking Confessions of "The Most Dangerous Man Alive,"* Manson reveals to Nuel Emmons (his former prison mate), that after he gave up on his wife, who left him for a truck driver, he never wanted to be "Mr. Straight" again. Manson stated that he experienced rejection since birth when his mother sold him for a pitcher of beer, so he has always been a half-assed nothing (Emmons 26). When Manson's mother was in prison for robbery, he also experienced rejection from his deeply religious aunt and uncle

(Emmons 31). In addition to being rejected by his mother and wife, the Tate/Polanski residence was also symbolic of the rejection that Manson endured throughout his life and the music industry's rejection of him. Terry Melcher (record producer and musician), who declined Manson's request for a record deal, was the former occupant at 10050 Cielo Drive ("Trial Summation of Prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi" 5). The reason Manson chose the Tate residence, according to Susan Atkins, was to instill fear into Terry Melcher (the former occupant) and to let him know that what Charlie said was final (*Los Angeles Times* 1969). As a result, the Tate residence was converted from the safe haven of Sharon Tate and her friends to a bloody coffin on the night of August 9, 1969. Thus, Manson's hatred towards others was the result of his seething resentment of his wife, mother, and Melcher; the resentment also served as a precipitant to his life of crime.

To compound his hatred towards mankind, Manson shared that he constantly experienced people turning their backs on him, so he did not trust anyone, and this put him on a real hatred high (Emmons 64). In other words, Manson's failed relationships with his mother, other family members, and his wife created the inability for him to bond with others and experience a sense of belonging, which ignited his state of paranoia. In Joel Norris' book *Serial Killers*, Norris asserts that if kids do not bond with primary caretakers, there is no foundation for trusting others later in life. Norris proceeds to say that this can also lead to isolation where intense violent fantasies become the primary source of gratification (125). Manson is indeed the epitome of Norris' assertion; he is a product of a broken home and fractured environment, and so were his followers. Manson admitted to Emmons that every girl that stepped foot in his van had bad family



relationships (Emmons 109). This served as Manson's platform to gaining initiates into the family and eventually proxy murderers. Moreover, Manson built on the inadequacies of others in order to gain their trust. On the contrary, Manson did not resort to isolation as a coping mechanism for his chaotic past. If anything, Manson always wanted to manipulate others in order to gain popularity and acceptance. While in prison, he became a fan and avid reader of Dale Carnegie's *How to Win and Influence People*, so he could master the art of manipulation. He also took guitar lessons under his prison mate Alvin "Creepy" Karpis as well.

Suffice it to say that Manson's life was tragic because he never felt loved, nor did he feel capable of giving love. Therefore, his experiences left feelings of inadequacy and lack of self-worth, so this left him suspicious of everyone. Manson's first sign of paranoia was his release from Terminal Island Prison in 1967; Manson became content with his incarceration, so he told the prison officers that he did not want to leave because he did not have a home in society. He said to prison officials that there was a flat void instead of excitement in his life (Emmons 78). For this reason, prison became Manson's home and haven, and this is also where Manson became the quintessential representation of paranoia.

Because of Manson's prison education and his manipulative, domineering proclivities, the soon-to-be hippie cult leader began to poise himself to become the mastermind of one of the most horrendous murders in the annals of crime. In an effort to fulfill his own paranoia and voids, Manson influenced his ragtag of followers that they need to incite a race war to develop his own racist agenda as he took steps in

orchestrating the “Helter Skelter” slayings. In Charles “Tex” Watson’s book *Manson’s Right Hand Speaks Out*, Watson recalls Manson’s “Helter Skelter” philosophy as a prophecy regarding a world of confusion. According to Manson’s former “right-hand man,” Manson believed that blacks would be blamed for the murders that his family committed and retaliate against the whites in a race war. Afterward, he and the family would retreat to a desert where blacks would eventually seek instruction from him (8). Manson also believed that he and his family were on the pathway to becoming world leaders, so “Helter Skelter” needed to begin under his auspices, and his family would be the ones who would bring this war to fruition.

In Robert Hendrickson’s film *Inside the Manson Gang*, which provides an inside scope of the everyday life of Manson’s family, it is revealed that Manson’s prison inmates, at Terminal Island, also boasted about an impending revolution where “whitey” would no longer run things, and blacks were taking over (00:3:15-00:7:12). With the proliferation of graphic reportage surrounding the violence and dissension between blacks and whites, it was becoming clear that blacks would fight for equal rights. Even the prison walls reverberated with rumors of Black Panther Conspiracy. Consequently, this exacerbated Manson’s hatred and fear of the rise of African Americans. Bugliosi also noted that the “Helter Skelter” murders were an attempt to start a Civil War between whites and blacks. Most notably, in this regard, after the Tate-LaBianca slayings, Manson ordered Linda Kasabian (follower who did not participate in any of the murders) to drive to a black neighborhood to toss the credit cards of the LaBiancas there, so someone black

can use them, and police could think a Black Panther used them after murdering the LaBiancas (*Helter Skelter* 359).

Manson's paranoia and fear of blacks were also triggered by the Beatles' *White Album*. Manson was a huge fan of this group, and he admitted to prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi that the Beatles' music and LSD were the catalysts for his crimes (*Helter Skelter* 609). Bugliosi further reveals that the Manson family already harbored natural hate for Negroes (*Helter Skelter* 613). To add, Manson and his family had already borne witness to the schisms and dissension between the whites and blacks. Bugliosi explains that Manson perceived the Beatles' album as hidden codes for the opportunity for him to write [sic] the wrongs he felt had been committed by society and by removing the perpetrators who happened to be African Americans (*Helter Skelter* 46). Bugliosi's observation is evident in Manson's conversation with James Pursell (California highway patrol officer) and sheriff deputy of Inyo County Don Ward. He told the two law enforcement officials that blacks were going to take over the country, and he and his group wanted a quiet peaceful place away from conflict, and this place of peace was Death Valley Ranch (*Helter Skelter* 179).

Amongst Manson's favorite songs, on the album, were "Helter Skelter," "Blackbird," "Piggies," and "Revolution 9." In his article "Charles Manson: How Cult Leader's Twisted Beatles Obsession Inspired Family Murders," Kory Grow featured George Harrison's commentary on Manson's twisted interpretation of the album in a statement that the former lead guitarist made to *Playboy* magazine in 1980. Harrison claims, "It was upsetting to be associated with something so sleazy as Charles Manson"

(5). Grow also features a statement made by Paul McCartney, one of the lead singers and songwriters of the Beatles, as he provided clarity for Manson's contorted interpretation of their album in an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine in June of 1970. McCartney said that "helter skelter" was a playground slide in an amusement park that was used as a ride from top to bottom, and the song was also about the rise and fall of the Roman Empire

(7). According to Grow, Harrison informed *Rolling Stone* magazine that their song "Piggies," was a song about the takedown of the bourgeoisie, dining out with forks and knives, that he started in 1966. Paul McCartney proceeded to share that "Blackbird" was written in support of black women during the Civil Rights Movement that was on the rise

(7). As a result, "rise" became one of Manson's favorite words, which was written in blood on the refrigerator of the LaBiancas to symbolize Armageddon and the end of the world.

In addition to Manson's obsession and erroneous interpretation of the Beatles music, Manson's sheer scope of paranoia and savagery also originated from his interpretation of Revelation 9:1-4, a Bible passage, which says, "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." Manson literally interpreted this book as a referral to the second coming of Jesus Christ where the locusts were to come on to the land as a "star" fall to the earth and an abyss offering a safe haven for the faithful, and the faithful ones were the Manson family. Thinking literally, Manson interpreted the culture-changing Beatles as the locusts and assumed that the abyss would be one of the nomadic family's bolt holes (Oughton 7). The hole would be where the Manson family would dwell after they took over America.

Bugliosi recounts Manson's thwarted aspiration to rule America when the cult leader wrote a letter to President Richard Nixon asking him to turn over the reins of power to him (*Helter Skelter* 497). Harvard Psychiatrist Martin Kantor addresses this literal way of thinking as a characteristic of paranoia in his book *Understanding Paranoia: A Guide for Professionals, Families and Sufferers*. Kantor suggests that extremely paranoid individuals overlook the denotative, which is superficial, and the connotative is suggestive and associative (8). So, not only were the Beatles a successful rock band, but they were also major influences on some of the most warp-minded and delusion criminals of the twentieth century—the Manson cult. Their music inflamed Manson's pernicious beliefs and superficial interpretations of their music. More specifically, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. riots began throughout America, so Manson believed that the blacks would grow weary of destroying their own communities and migrate to the white parts of town to destroy them. Manson also had visions of angry blacks invading the homes of rich whites and butchering their occupants; this would definitely incite a war between blacks and whites. Perhaps, Manson believed that his family would "beat them (blacks) to the punch."

As a result of his fear and paranoia, Manson said that he and his followers would survive this war by hiding in Death Valley, which was the bottomless pit until the war was over. After the war, Manson's circle would surface from beneath and take the reign over the black population. Manson told Stephanie Schram (one of his followers) that the blacks were getting ready to overthrow the whites, and only those who fled and hid in the bottomless pit would be safe (Bugliosi 368). In the midst of all of their "preparation," and

securing their safe havens from the horrors of the black and white war, it was all in vain. None of the Beatles' prophecies came to fruition as Manson led them to believe, and medical professionals have provided a term for such situations. Tali Sharot, professor of Cognitive Neuroscience, discusses and explains this aspect of tarnished hope and expectation as Optimism Bias. In her book, *The Optimism Bias: A Tour of the Irrationally Positive Brain*, Sharot defines the concept as the difference between a person's expectation and the outcome that follows. Sharot continues to explain that if expectations are better than reality, the bias is optimistic; however, if reality is better than expected the bias is pessimistic (942). Significantly, Manson's expectations and aspirations of taking over the world did not come to fruition as he led his followers to believe, so the family's hopes and expectations turned out to be unfortunate optimism at the expense of nine lives. If anything, the city of Los Angeles became a place of mayhem as a result of what his followers had done. The residents of Los Angeles went into panic mode. Many celebrities, especially those who made their list of slayings, fled to other states; guns and guard dog sales skyrocketed, and many residents flushed their drugs down the toilet as a result of the rumors that the murders were drug-related (*Inside the Manson Gang Documentary* 0014:12-00:15:55). Now, Manson's fear was not only of blacks; he now had to worry about the police, so they fled to their "hippie heaven" of Death Valley where they were captured and arrested in October of 1969.

In an A&E documentary *Manson: The Notorious Crime and Trial*, it was revealed that the Manson family called this space their "hippie heaven." Their heaven was also a survival camp in which Manson was the commander, and his followers had to do as they

were told. Manson patterned himself after the practices of Nazi party leader Adolf Hitler. It is also mentioned in the documentary that Mason began terrorizing his followers, depriving them of sleep and food, and feeding them lots of acid. UCLA drug expert David E. Smith and founder of the free clinic in Haight Asbury, San Francisco, conducted a four-month study on the Manson family before the “Helter Skelter” murders. In his 1968 case study, “A Case Study of the Charles Manson Group Marriage Commune,” Smith concluded that it was not only drugs such as acid that caused the violence among the Manson family. Instead, Manson was disturbed, so he developed a paranoid delusional system that led to violence (1). Smith’s findings confirmed Manson’s diagnoses while at Terminal Island. Prison psychiatrists diagnosed him with Anti-Social Personality Disorder (psychopathy) and paranoid schizophrenia. Manson, through his daily interactions with his family, bequeathed these psychological traits to those who followed him. This also contributed to the shared paranoid delusion of Manson’s followers. Their shared delusion disorder was also the main precipitator in their crimes.

After the Tate-LaBianca murders, Manson’s paranoia and fear of being captured by the police led him to hire armed guards at their communal pad of Spahn Ranch where he and his family temporarily dwelled (*Helter Skelter* 381). Manson ordered a twenty-four-hour armed guard detail at the ranch in order to protect him and his followers from the Black Panthers. Manson was specifically afraid of the Black Panthers because he believed that he shot one of them, Bernard Crowe, after one of his followers (Charles “Tex” Watson) did not pay Crowe for the drugs that he purchased. Consequently, Manson shot Crowe in order to salvage the life of Watson. Manson thought he killed

Crowe after his body was dumped near the University of Los Angeles, California, but he found out via a radio broadcast that Crowe was alive. In order to avoid a retaliatory attack from the Black Panthers, he and his followers slept in caves (Emmons 186).

In addition to protecting himself and his family, Manson attempted to enlist a motorcycle gang (the Straight Satans) as his personal bodyguards; however, the group laughed at Manson except for one gang member, Danny DeCarlo because he wanted access to Manson's girls. (*Helter Skelter* 115). Failing that, Manson established his own system of security at Spahn Ranch. At his direction, female members were ordered to stand guard. Members were ordered to dye T-shirts black for use at night. Walkie talkies were set up and used to connect the different campsites on the ranch. Manson's directions were designed to insulate the family from the outside world (California Case Law: People v. Manson et al.) After the shooting of Crowe, the Manson family discovered that Crowe was *not* a Black Panther; he was just a former dope dealer in Los Angeles (*Helter Skelter* 372). Manson's paranoia was a way to levy complete destruction onto the lives of society as the result of his own paranoia, fear, and insecurity. In a 1970 *Rolling Stone* magazine interview, Manson stated, "A baby is born into this world in a state of fear. Total paranoia is total awareness." Manson's paranoid delusional disorder caused his psychological and social decline. Manson's psychological transition consisted of an aspiring musician to a cold-blooded mass murderer. As mentioned earlier, the most perplexing of this case is that he did not physically participate in the murders that he orchestrated. To add, the most notable factor in Manson's wrath is his ability to



manipulate young educated individuals, who were the off springs of upstanding citizens, to become proxy murderers or murderers on his behalf.

It has been said that the greatest sacrifice is when one sacrifices one's own happiness for the sake of someone else, and there is no better example of sacrifice than the love and devotion that intelligent, well-rounded individuals had for their cult leader who possessed the irrational belief that he was the messiah and savior of the world. They sacrificed their own lives and freedom on Manson's behalf. Together with their "Messiah," they looked at the rest of the world through the lens of bigotry and became violent psychopaths. As intimated above, Manson played no part in the savage butchery for which he will be forever associated. Instead of getting his own hands dirty, he persuaded others to drench theirs in the blood of nine others because he did not want to violate his parole. Manson's road to persuading them to murder entailed the following tactics: drugs, sex, music, and his twisted "Helter Skelter" teaching.

Because Manson's followers acted on his behalf, the prosecution experienced difficulty in convicting Manson of nine counts of first-degree murder and one count of conspiracy to commit murder. According to Vincent Bugliosi (the prosecutor for the Los Angeles District Attorney's office), Manson was convicted by circumstantial evidence and conspiracy laws. As noted in chapter one, Manson was convicted under the California Penal Code of "Joint Responsibility Rule of Conspiracy," which mandates that those who conspire in murder may be indicted equally with the offenders who physically committed the murders ("Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury: Greatest Closing Arguments in Modern Law"). Years later, the case has remained a focus of the nation's nightmares

because the question still remains: How did a 5'2 ex-convict, self-proclaimed loser, and third-grade dropout convince educated, middle-class citizens to commit murder by proxy? As Manson eloquently once stated, "You can convince anybody of anything if you just push it at them all of the time" (Bugliosi 628). Manson's brazen proclamation suggests that he fully understood that the key concept of brainwashing lies in consistency and commitment. Psychology professor Robert Cialdini's book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* provides his theory on consistency. Cialdini writes that it is important to recognize that consistency is valued and adaptive. In contrast, Cialdini continues, inconsistency is thought to be an undesirable personality trait. The person whose beliefs, words, and deeds do not match may be seen as indecisive, confused, or two-faced. So, good personal consistency is highly valued in our culture (45). Manson's vicious method of control enabled him to inspire and dramatize the push that his followers needed to murder.

In the midst of Manson's consistent "Helter Skelter" teachings, brainwashing his followers and convincing them to perform the brutal slayings, in August of 1969, did not happen instantaneously or by chance. Manson had to gradually escort them into a life of murder, so drugs such as LSD and acid were his major source of maintaining control over his followers. Manson's follower Paul Watkins admitted to Bugliosi that Manson always took a smaller dose of LSD, so he could remain in command (Bugliosi 628). Manson told them that he was their newscaster, prophet, and their everything (*Manson: The Notorious Crime and Trial Documentary* 00:23:10-46). Manson's followers, more akin to the traditional American middle-class men and women, became captivated by the ex-con

because he wielded power with swagger with his prison stories and his guitar playing. A number of them came from stable, religious backgrounds and, law-abiding homes but had their lives disrupted by family breakups ranging from parental divorces to fleeing from political persecution. Manson's followers and proxy murderers were all such cases. As stated in the Introduction, Mary Brunner, Manson's first recruit, was a PhD candidate and librarian at UCLA; Lynette Fromme was pursuing a Psychology degree with aspirations of becoming a Social Worker; Sandra Good was half-way through her Master's degree upon meeting Manson; and Susan Atkins' Glee Club members recalled her as a shy, sensitive girl. Atkins' own baby was only ten months old when she butchered Sharon Tate and her unborn son Paul Richard Polanski; Leslie Van Houten ("Lu-Lu") was a girl scout, a straight A student, and homecoming queen; Patricia Krenwinkel ("Katie") a bible student, Sunday school teacher, and aspiring nun left her middle-class home to find someone to call her own; Charles Denton Watson was a ("Tex") star of football and baseball teams, student body president, and voted most likely to succeed by his high school senior class. Linda Kasabian ("Darling") drove the killers to the homes of their victims and witnessed the massacres. After meeting Manson, they began traveling from place to place as he administered copious amounts of acid and LSD to them while telling them that time was man-made, and the whole idea was to eradicate the concept of time to segment them from the outside world. Drugs, in Manson's family, made for blissful, erotic communion as they became more rooted into a world of deviance and evil.

Manson's way of coercing them to surrender themselves to him also came by way of his thwarted teachings. Manson's teachings consisted of telling them to let go of their

old selves, and they had to die to be reborn and rule the world (Oughton 6). In a 2014 film, *Life After Manson*, Patricia Krenwinkel provided her chaotic recollection of Manson's influence and complete control. Former follower Patricia Krenwinkel states, "We . . . we. Were so locked and like, it's just like. . . okay, okay, this must be, this. I mean, you just become more. . . and more like. . . a robot." In Earl Caldwell's 1971 *New York Times* article "Robot Theory Cited in Defense of Manson's 3 Co-Defendants," Caldwell mentions that Maxwell Keith, Van Houten's defense attorney, argued the "Robot Theory" during the trial. In Maxwell's closing arguments, he carried out Bugliosi's premise which argued that the cult were simply robots; they were completely controlled by another human being. Maxwell's stated to the jury: "If you believe that they were mindless robots, they cannot be guilty of premeditated murder." Further, they had been completely brainwashed by Manson. The attorney added that his client, Van Houten, really believed that Manson was God (36). Unfortunately, Keith's argument did not suffice for his client's acquittal. Instead, Keith's closing statements aided the prosecution in proving Manson's power over his followers was so strong that they would go as far as committing murder.

The cult's continued deification of Manson and his teachings bears witness to the psychic wounds that would soon injure his followers—prison and social death. Unbeknownst to his circle of socially and emotionally broken individuals, Manson was equipping them with a homicidal license that would drive them straight into prison and make them moral eye sores to society. Psychiatrist Mark Banschick, in his article "What Awful Marriages and Cults Have in Common," explains how individuals as such become

complete fall victims to cults. According to Banschick, victims fall completely demoralized, injured, and trapped. He continues to assert that mind control and abuse are not unique to any one situation. Anyone, no matter how intelligent and strong they are, can be drawn into a cult under the right circumstances. According to Banschick, brainwashing is like the “boiling frog theory” which suggests that frogs do not perceive danger until they are cooked to death); brainwashing is very subtle and individuals do not recognize it is happening until it is too late. Lastly, the author asserts that cults are designed to keep a clear separation between those inside and outside. The more faithful a follower, the more reliant the person is on the group. The group becomes everything to the person: family, friends, church, home, work, etc. (1-3). Manson’s followers had no idea that they were being hoaxed until years after their prison sentence. Some of them remained loyal even after they were arrested. Manson also understood that isolation, as Banschick suggests, was necessary to maintain power and control. The ranches in which they dwelled were far away from their parents and loved ones to allow any chance of reuniting with them. In spite of their education levels and honorable family backgrounds, Manson was able to create a moral defect in his followers by converting these individuals into some of the most famous villains of the twentieth century.

The most evident example of his mind control was the administering of drugs and scattered preaching (brainwashing) was his ability to ingratiate himself. He led his flock to believe that he was their only living savior who cared about them. Lynette Fromme and Paul Watkins recall, as well, some of Manson’s tactics of mind control and manipulation. Fromme revealed that Manson robbed them of their parents to give them

back to themselves (*Inside the Manson Gang Documentary* 00:18:26-53). In other words, Spahn Ranch was a way to isolate his followers from their parents and all the values that they were taught during their upbringing. Watkins recalled his cult leader saying: “Life is one big fuck, and death is its climax.” Watkins further divulged that Manson also led them to believe that he was the Jesus Christ who died on the cross two-thousand years ago, and it did not do a fucking bit of good, so here he is again (*Inside the Manson Gang Documentary* 00:24:12-29). In the midst of Manson’s paranoia and ability to recruit criminals, there was one who did not oblige to the slayings that Manson demanded. According to Bugliosi, Linda Kasabian was cut from a different cloth. She was a true hippie and was horrified by what she saw at the Tate-LaBianca crime scene. Kasabian told Bugliosi, before the trial, that she knew that she was going to have to tell the world what happened. As she testified, America became captivated by the horrific testimony of Kasabian (*Manson: The Notorious Crime and Trial Documentary* 00:31:21-42:24). Five months later, she testified for the prosecution in exchange for immunity (*Manson Documentary* 00:42:26-44:01). In the documentary, Bugliosi noted that Kasabian was named as the star witness for the prosecution, for which she took the witness stand for eighteen days.

Because his family believed that he was God, it was not difficult to persuade them to murder for him. In Charles Watson’s book *Will You Die for Me?*, Watson provides an apt description of his whimsical naiveté towards Manson when he called to inform his parents that he met Jesus Christ in a desert. Watson writes, “You’ve always been wanting me to be religious,” I had told my mother. “Well, I’ve met that Jesus you preached about

all the time. I've met him and he's here right now with me in the desert" (5). Watson stated in his book that the family truly believed that Manson was Jesus. He was the Messiah, their savior, and their souls. Manson could ask *anything* of them, even their lives, and it was his because he was God, and they do not turn their backs on God (5;12). As noted earlier, the described loyalty and deity towards Manson was exemplified with the savage butchery of nine people, along with drug use, theft, and promiscuity. Watson also recalls Manson also preaching to their drug-addled brains that once they stripped themselves down to a perfect being, all body, like some monkey or coyote free in the wild, not thinking, not willing, once you do that, fear does not exist. More specifically, Manson stated, "You've already died, everything that animal body of yours, so even death can't frighten you. You are free. Free to live, free to die. Free to kill" (5). By constantly plying them with LSD, hashish, belladonna, and acid, Manson was able to manipulate and coerce his family into performing any deed that he demanded, even murder.

The once clever and independent-thinking Manson followers were hoaxed by their leader into performing a number of social, sexual, and fatal "to-dos because of their extreme fascination with him. Psychiatrists Rajendra Persuad and Peter Bruggen, explain in their article "Charles Manson: The Cult of Personality Surrounding a Killer," that there is a diagnosis for individuals who become enamored with dangerous individuals. There is a term within forensic psychology called "hybristophilia," which is common among women and is defined as being attracted to or being erotically stimulated by dangerous individuals. Some specialists believe this is a kind of disturbed attraction in which people

can become fixated on other fetishes, often termed perversions or paraphilias (1). The psychiatrists also included Sheila Isenberg's intriguing psychological theories and research regarding hybristophilia. In Sheila Isenberg's book, *Women Who Love Men Who Kill*, Isenberg suggests that marriage to notorious serial killers like Charles Manson offers women who suffer from low self-esteem the thrill of fame (4). In this regard, twenty-five-year-old Afton Burton announced to *Time* magazine, in 2016, that she was going to marry eighty-year-old Charles Manson. Also known as "Star," Burton stated that she deeply cared for him and was concerned about his health. In retrospect, it would be fair to conclude that the gratification of notoriety was an additional reason that Burton married Manson. Isenberg continues to argue that a killer's notoriety provides a sense of worth. Isenberg proposes that the bigger the impact of the crowd, the more important he/she feels (4). During their time at Spahn Ranch, Manson provided his followers with a sense of self-worth and belonging; all of them were runaways in hopes of filling a void. To illustrate, Nancy Pittman ("Brenda") said she ran away from home because there was nothing to keep her there. They were not a family; they just occupied the same space. Lynette Fromme glibly proclaimed that every girl should have a daddy like Charlie (*Inside the Manson Gang Documentary* 00:9:16-30). Their pre-existing emotional needs, insecurities, voids, and lack of self-worth only became compounded by drug use, orgies at the behest of Manson, and the guise of "Helter Skelter" war. Additionally, they never really received the love that they sought in Manson.

In an attempt to further his own bizarre agenda in leading the new world, Manson accomplished his mission of gaining control over his harem of followers, and Susan



Atkins bears witness to this in her book *The Shattered Myth of Helter Skelter*. Atkins revealed the disturbing aspects of Manson's power. She says, "from the clothes you wore to the way you wore your hair, the merest comment from Manson sent people scurrying to please him. It was his ability to simply do no more than suggest something is done to make it happen" (18). With this in mind, pleasing Manson with everyday routines was just the beginning of exhibiting their loyalty. Their crimes were the ultimate display of their loyalty and love for their "Jesus Christ." The exploitations of Manson's scattered philosophies and control tactics are also revealed by Charles Watson in his book *Will You Die for Me*, the former second in command of Spahn Ranch pontificated on Manson's control and manipulation of his followers. As Watson writes, "Manson had an intuitive sense of drama as he showed later at his trial. He also knew how to play to an audience, and we had an audience that night (August 9, 1969)" (4). He consistently showcased his false love for his family, and they believed him. Their ability to be easily persuaded to commit murder is exemplified in Leslie Van Houten's statement, in a television documentary *Life After Manson*. While incarcerated and still serving her life sentence, Van Houten admitted that she murdered for Manson out of her own gullibility. She said that the control that Manson had, not even through some feat of majestic mentalism, was the result of her own sheer damning gullibility (00:20:10-50). Van Houten's confession seems to apply to Manson's other followers, for they were all gullible.

As a result of their crimes and attempted retaliation against society, Manson and his followers spent their remaining days behind prison walls after their initial death sentence, on April 19, 1971 (*Helter Skelter* 596). Bugliosi recalls the reaction of the

Manson cult. Bugliosi states, “I looked over at Manson and his family, and they were trembling. Here’s someone who always spoke about the beauty of death. He was always telling everyone that death was a beautiful thing and when we killed these people, we’ll be doing them a favor and they won’t realize it” (Oughton 8). Unlike their victims, the lives of the Manson family were spared by a decision made by the California State Supreme Court. On February 19, 1972, the California State Supreme Court voted six to one to abolish the death penalty under Article I Section VI of the State Constitution which forbids cruel or unusual punishment (*Helter Skelter* 633). Aside from his own demise (incarceration), the irony in Manson’s warped philosophy about death and murder is his attempt to preserve his own life while conspiring to take the lives of others. Even though his physical death was spared when California overturned the death penalty, Manson spent the rest of his life in prison disavowing his guilt and proclaiming his innocence.

Cobbled together, Macbeth’s and Manson’s paranoia is the primary psychological linkage that makes them counterparts. The catalyst of their paranoia stemmed from their hunger for power. Macbeth wanted to rule Scotland, so he had to extinguish the life of King Duncan, but, thereafter, he was afraid of his own death. Subsequently, Macbeth had to get rid of those who were a threat to his throne. Likewise, Manson had a thirst for power over his country as well. Manson was threatened by African Americans, so his strategy to gain power over them was to incite a war that would inhibit their rise to power and result in his own. The war would enable him to become the primary beneficiary of the race war between blacks and whites. More important, these two serial killers could

not, and would not, act on their own. Their ability to manipulate vagrants into believing the unnerving portrayal of innocent people as the enemy resulted in their criminal status proxy murderers. As stated earlier, Macbeth preyed on the naiveté of three unnamed murderers in *Macbeth*, while Manson preyed on the low self-esteem and naiveté of young, lost, and unattractive individuals. As Manson conveyed to Emmons, he only wanted young and not too pretty or smart girls in his circle (Emmons 59). As sheriff deputy, Don Ward of Inyo County stated, the family was incapable of murder without Charlie (*Inside the Manson Gang Documentary* 00:35:03-57).

As noted earlier, both murderers also had prophecies. In Macbeth's case, it was three witches who predicted his kingship. Just as the witches advised Macbeth to fear Banquo, Manson believed that the Beatles, through their music, advised him to fear the African Americans and take action against them. For this reason, Manson relied heavily on the Beatles Rock band. Because of their psychopathology of paranoid delusional disorder, this not only led to tenure of crime, but it also led to their own demise. Macbeth lived by the sword, so he died by the sword in Act five.

MACBETH. Bring me no more reports. Let them fly all! Till Birnam Wood  
remove to Dunsinane, I cannot taint with fear (5.3)

It is clear that Macbeth has grown weary of avoiding his own death. He is no longer interested in being informed about the status of his enemies. Now, Macbeth is just waiting for his own doom, which is crafted by Macduff. Macduff finally avenges the murder of Duncan by beheading Macbeth. Manson, on the other hand, did not die by the way he lived; he perished socially. Upon apprehension, Manson was thirty-two years old,

and he had already spent twenty-three years of his life in prison. After the state of California overturned his death sentence to life, in 1972, Manson spent forty-six years in San Quentin State prison until his death in 2017. It is safe to conclude that Manson's entire life was indeed a bottomless pit or a sunken place in which he spent the majority of his life.

This chapter concludes from the premise that paranoid delusional disorder served as the precipitating factor in the crimes of Macbeth and his real-life counterpart Charles Manson. Their motives led them to covet the possessions of other individuals; the main possession was power. Each serial killer wanted to take reign over their prospective countries: Macbeth aspired to rule Scotland, and Manson wanted to rule America. As the FBI asserts, there are two general motives for murder: need or greed. In their cases, it was the latter. These two serial killers turned to crime in order to covet what they wanted – power. True crime writer Peter Vronsky calls killers of this sort hedonist lust killers, and these types of serial killers will also constitute the basis of discussion in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### I'M EVE *NOT* STEVE: GENDER DYSPHORIA IN THOMAS HARRIS' *THE SILENCE OF THE LAMB*'S BUFFALO BILL AND EDWARD GEIN "THE PLAINFIELD BUTCHER"

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of the case of gender dysphoria in the lives of Jame Gumb "Buffalo Bill" in Thomas Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs* and Edward Gein ("The Plainfield Butcher"). This chapter also explains the violent repercussions that their victims endured as a result of their failed attempt to transition into womanhood, and, ultimately this chapter proceeds to explain how gender dysphoria drove these killers into murdering women in order to retrieve their secondary sex characteristics (vulvas and breasts), which also led to their *own* demise. Furthermore, Gumb and Gein's desire to become women combine the elements of coveting and murder, which led them into criminal deviance. George R. Brown, Associate Chairman of Psychiatry at East Tennessee State University, explains that those who experience the desire to become the opposite sex may be labeled as Gender Dysphoric individuals. In his article "Bioethical Issues in the Management of Gender Dysphoria." Brown identifies those who experience gender dysphoria as a heterogeneous group of individuals who express varying degrees of dissatisfaction with their anatomic gender (hence gender dysphoria) and the desire to possess the secondary sexual characteristics of the opposite

sex (11). Coupled with Brown's definition, the American Psychiatric Association lists the symptoms of Gender Dysphoria in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders* (DSM-5). According to the APA, a person experiencing gender dysphoria will have the following symptoms:

1. A marked incongruence between one's experienced and expressed gender and primary and/or secondary characteristics.
2. A strong desire to be rid of one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics.
3. A strong desire for the primary and/or secondary sex characteristics of the other gender.
4. A strong desire to be of the other gender.
5. A strong desire to be treated as the other gender.
6. A strong conviction that one has the typical feelings and reactions of the other gender (DSM-5 302.85).

Jame Gumb, the primary antagonist and transgender serial killer in *The Silence of the Lambs*, demonstrates the symptoms of gender dysphoria, as he attempts to become a female transsexual at the fatal expense of five women. The abhorrence of Gumb's behavior can be attributed to his aspirations of becoming a transsexual, which according to Endocrinologist Harry Benjamin, in his 1996 book *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, is the most extreme form of gender dysphoria. Benjamin defines a transsexual as someone who permanently changes their genitals in order to claim membership in a gender other than the one assigned at birth (45). Therefore, Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs* is a

horror novel that provides clarity of Gumb's severe gender dysphoria and the psychological trauma that serves as the catalyst to his horrific crimes.

Harris' novel also follows FBI Academy trainee Clarice Starling as she endeavors to identify the murderer of five young women with the help of a former psychiatrist and incarcerated serial killer Hannibal "Cannibal" Lecter (Gumb's former psychiatrist). Lecter provides Starling with cryptic clues in order to uncover Gumb's true identity in exchange for a transfer to a "better" prison, specifically a federal institution, as the hunt for Gumb intensifies after he kidnaps Catherine Martin (daughter of United States Senator Ruth Martin) (Harris 108). *The Silence of the Lambs* positions Gumb as a heterosexual male with a pernicious desire to become a woman after he has been denied as a suitable candidate for sex reassignment surgery by three major transsexual centers in the United States. Now, frustrated in his failed attempts, he commences to murdering and skinning young, overweight women in order to procure their skin to make himself a female suit (Harris 367). The savagery of Gumb's desire to transform is also evident in his *Modus Operandi*.

Gumb, also known as "Buffalo Bill," is a compelling character because of his tempestuous *Modus Operandi*. As previously mentioned, instead of transforming to womanhood the legal way (sex reassignment surgery), he is forced to do so on his own. His tactics in doing so, or *Modus Operandi*, is to feign injury with his arm in a cast and plead for help in lifting heavy items into his van, so he can lure potential victims. The FBI refers to this technique of trapping and luring of victims as "snaring" (*The Serial Killer Files* 203). Afterward, he beats his victims into an unconscious state and takes

them to his home for their doomed stay. Gumb then leaves the women in his basement for about three days in order to starve them. Within this configuration, starvation is vital because starvation causes extreme weight loss, which loosens the skin and makes flaying (skinning) them easier (Harris 150). Harris also explains that the starving of Gumb's victims makes them more manageable and easier to handle, for starvation reduces the strength of individuals, prevents despair, and destructive tantrums that might damage the skin (Harris 206). After Gumb starves his victims to death, he shoots or strangles them, whereupon he would skin parts of their body in order to retrieve the necessary female sex characteristics from his victims. Afterward, he would dispose of their remains into a river in order to eradicate any traces of evidence (Harris 110). In particular, the body of his third victim Kimberly Jane Emberg was found in the Elk River in West Virginia (Harris 100). Equally significant is Catherine Martin of Memphis, Tennessee, (Gumb's intended sixth victim) who also served as a worthy contender in crafting his final "outfit" because she was just the perfect size, a fourteen to be exact. Harris puts special emphasis on Martin's character because Gumb needs more than her skin; she would finalize his transformation (Harris 111). In a conversation with Clarice Starling, Lecter intriguingly states, "Buffalo Bill needs Catherine Martin because he wants a vest with tits on it" (157). This passage indicates that Gumb believes that Martin's secondary sex characteristics (breasts) will satisfy and finalize his non-surgical transformation. In brief, Gumb's MO reveals his discomfort with his identity because he is constantly plagued by a sex change crisis, which also adds to his psychosis.



In addition to Gumb's monstrous MO, his murderous signature (the personal mark or imprint of the offender) was also perplexing to the FBI in the novel, as Harris highlights the fact that Gumb inserts moths into the throats of his captives. As witnessed in the novel, Starling investigates the significance of the moth as she delivers this piece of evidence to Dr. Pilcher, an entomologist in West Virginia. Pilcher then reveals to Starling that the insects that Gumb lodged into the throats of his victims were called Erebus Odora or Black Witch Moth (Harris 105). Further, Lecter situates the importance of the moth into clarity to Starling when he says, "The significance of the moth is change. Worm into a butterfly, or moth. Billy thinks he wants to change" (Harris 163). For this purpose, Gumb employs this haunting signature as a symbol to express his non-surgical transformation from male to female (MtF).

To be sure, Gumb's gender altering appearance, which also symbolizes his gender dysphoria, is also implicitly demonstrated in the scene that is believed, by many readers, to be the scariest and most primal part of the novel. As Gumb crafts his female outfit, from female human skin, on his sewing machine, his head is covered with the blonde hair and scalp of one of his victims; he tucks his phallus between his legs with a dishmop while applying red lipstick to his lips. Harris writes, "Gumb uses a dishmop to tuck his penis and testicles back between his legs. He whipped the shower curtain aside and stood before the mirror, hitting a hipshot pose despite the grinding it caused in his private parts" (Harris 136). This particular scene underscores the understanding of Gumb's self-resentment, gender distress, and his strong desire to become a woman.

Gumb's gender dysphoria is also evident as he attempts to chemically castrate himself by taking hormones in order to sexually reassign himself into womanhood. Harris explains, "The hormones he'd taken—Premarin for a while and then diethylstilbestrol, orally—couldn't do anything for his voice, but they had thinned the hair a little across his slightly budding breasts" (*The Silence of the Lambs* 136). Madeline B. Deutsch, emergency medicine specialist and director of the University of Southern California at San Francisco Transgender Care, explains why Premarin is an important drug in transgender/transsexual individuals such as Gumb in her article "Overview of Feminizing Hormone Therapy." Deutsch explains that Premarin can be used as part of gender reassignment for male to female transsexuals, by providing a source of estradiol, an active form of the female hormone estrogen. She further purports that Premarin stimulates the development of female sex characteristics such as breasts development, a redistribution of facial and body subcutaneous fat, reduction of muscle mass, reduction of body hair (and to lesser extent, facial hair), change in sweat and odor patterns, and the possible reversal of scalp hair loss. It also includes a reduction in erectile dysfunction, changes in libido, reduced or absent sperm count and ejaculatory fluid, and reduces the testicular size (1-3). Conversely, Diethylstilbestrol (DES), that Harris mentions, is almost no longer used because it was proven to increase the risk of cancer according to the National Cancer Institute. The National Cancer Institute also reported that DES was initially a synthetic form of estrogen given to pregnant women from 1940-1971 to prevent miscarriages, premature labor, and related complications or pregnancy. Nonetheless, the drug was still used by transsexual women (National Cancer Institute).

Hence, it is not only Gumb's sewing scene that serves as the pivotal moment of his gender distress; it is also his use of medication that becomes a reassertion of the killer's struggle and his road to transformation. The use of Premarin, in addition to his victim's skin, was also significant because it would assure him a successful non-surgical reassignment into womanhood.

Gumb's motive for murder is made clear by Hannibal Lecter during a visit from Starling. It is important to consider the conversation that she has with Lecter regarding Gumb's reason for murdering young women:

LECTER. Of each particular thing, ask 'what is it itself? What is in its nature? What does he do, this man you want?'

STARLING. He kills—

LECTER. No. That is incidental. What is the first principle thing he does? What needs does he serve by killing?

STARLING. Anger, social resentment, sexual frus [sic] ---

LECTER. No

STARLING. What then?

LECTER. He covets. In fact, he covets the very thing you are. It's his nature to covet. (Harris 227). Lecter's theory regarding Gumb's motive suggests need; Gumb feels the need to become a woman, specifically to carry out his deceased mother's dream of becoming a model and Miss Sacramento. Lecter hints to Starling that Gumb covets womanhood, which is why he states, "the very thing you are." In fact, Lecter makes it clear to Starling that Gumb is making himself girl suits out of real girls, large women,

because he has to make certain that he has things that fit (Harris 163). As mentioned earlier, Gumb only needs and wants the sex characteristics of women in order to acquire a female status, so his only option, in this case, is murder, which remains perplexing to Starling.

In Kendall Phillips article “Unmasking Buffalo Bill: Interpretive Controversy and *The Silence of the Lambs*,” Phillips contends that femaleness is the crux of Harris’ work. The author further argues that femaleness is an embattled condition throughout the entire novel, which also suggests that Starling and Buffalo Bill both seek the same ultimate prize, an identity through very different means. According to Phillips, Starling chooses to follow community standards and struggle with the perils of patriarchy while Buffalo rejects community in pursuit of his own narcissistic desires (42; 44). Phillips’ theory implies that womanhood is emphasized, in Harris’ book, in order to deify womanhood as the ultimate assertion of wholeness. While Starling’s womanhood merits her the fondness of a well-respected, yet psychopathic serial killer (Hannibal Lecter), she sometimes finds emptiness in her womanhood as she attempts to prove herself to her male co-workers in the FBI. Gumb, on the other hand, views womanhood as superior. In Barbara Creed’s article “Screening the Male: Exploring Masculinities in the Hollywood Cinema,” Creed suggests that Gumb sees womanhood as superior and a more desirable state because women have the ability to give birth (5). Obviously, Gumb cannot achieve such as a man. Unfortunately, he must employ the tropes of hedonist lust with violence in order to be what Starling is—a woman. Both characters are, in essence, both entangled in a psychological identity battle.

Gumb's gender dysphoria is causality in his crimes, so he is undergoing a physical transformation to be accepted into the world of femininity, while Starling attempts to undergo a psychological transformation to be accepted by men. Put plainly, Starling must suppress her femininity in order to prove herself to her male superiors at the FBI Academy; however, Gumb must *assert* his femininity by slaughtering and adorning himself in the skin of his victims.

Gumb's *raison d'être* for murder becomes more vivid to Starling as she attempts to unveil Gumb's true identity through her burgeoning relationship with Hannibal Lecter. With attention to Starling's theory on transsexuals, she says that they are not usually categorized as dangerous or violent individuals at all. Starling says, "Dr. Lecter, there's no correlation that I ever saw between transsexualism and violence—transsexuals are passive types, usually" (Harris 164). Correspondingly, Jack Crawford (Starling's boss and Director of the Behavioral Science Unit) hypothesizes that transsexuals are not crazy, they are not perverts, and they are not queers (Harris 181). Starling and Crawford's observation regarding the behavior of transsexuals is an appalling anagnorisis in Harris' work, as she acknowledges the docile countenance of transsexuals, which is contradistinction to Gumb's roguish and sadistic crimes. If anything, transsexuals/transgenders, like Gumb, are the *victims* of crimes, specifically, hate crimes.

The Trans Murder Monitoring Archives-TvT reported that as of November 2017, one hundred and eighty-seven trans murders were reported in America. Also, the *Los Angeles Times* featured a report, in November of 2017, given by the Human Rights Campaign regarding transsexual murders. The HRC reported that eighty-eight of those

murdered victims were transgender women, and nearly all of them were black or Hispanic. The Human Rights Campaign said that these killings were committed by lovers, acquaintances, family members, neighbors, and strangers. More specifically, In July, of 2017, Dwayna Hickerson, a former Navy sailor, was sentenced to forty years in prison for stabbing Dee Whigham one hundred and nineteen times after discovering that she was a transgender woman. Hickerson stated that after he and Whigham had a “form” of sex, she revealed her status as a transgender woman, and he just lost “it.” (*New York Post*). Additionally, not only are transsexuals victims of hate crimes, they are also known to self-destruct before they inflict harm on anyone else. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention released an article, in January of 2014, titled ‘Suicide Attempts among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults,’ which stated that forty-six percent of transsexuals attempt suicide, and forty-two percent of transsexual women attempted suicide as well in 2013. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention also revealed that the suicide attempts are elevated among those who disclose to everyone that they are transgender or gender non-conforming (2). As far as the victimization of transsexuals is concerned, Gumb offers no resemblance of these innocuous personality traits articulated by Starling and Crawford, for he is the antithesis of their beliefs regarding transsexuals. So then, the catalyst that drives individuals such as Gumb to murder can be attributed to jealousy of other women and extreme depression due to his identity crisis, which again reflects his gender dysphoria.

Peter Vronsky theorizes Starling and Crawford’s theory regarding the innocence of transsexuals in his book *The Definitive History of the Phenomenon of Serial Murder:*

*The Method and Madness of Monsters*. Vronsky stigmatizes killers of Gumb's caliber as Hedonist Lust Killers, as he asserts that characters such as Gumb do not want to hurt anyone. Instead, what they covet requires them to kill, so they can acquire their "prized possessions." He writes, "They are the scariest and most monstrous. Not all of them want to hurt or kill. They want to wear your skin or eat your liver or have sex with your severed head. Your life is in their way. They have an ideal victim type such as footwear clothing worn, color/style of hair, or body shape. They need skin-to-skin contact in their killing" (164). With this in mind, Gumb is the epitome of Vronsky's assertion, for Gumb only *needs* something from his victims. In order to acquire his needs, he must eradicate the lives of a certain type (overweight) in order to successfully reassign himself as a female. Vronsky's theory also explains why Lecter says the Gumb's murders are incidental; he only kills women, whom he views as objects, for the sake of coveting, and he then disposes of the unused remains. As mentioned earlier, women, at the hands of Gumb, became his objects to be used for sexual transformation then discarded. This can also be witnessed in Gumb's chilling instruction to Catherine Martin as he admonishes her to rub lotion on her skin while trapped in his well. In an aside to his dog ("Precious"), Gumb refers to Martin as "it" in order to depersonalize her when he says, "Yes *it* will get the hose, won't *it*, Darlingheart, yes it will" (Harris 155; emphasis added). Herein lies the evidence that Gumb dehumanizes his victims in order to covet what he needs for a successful, non-surgical transformation. The women, who died at the hands of Gumb, became mere objects; he used them then obliterated them from his sight by dumping their remains in rivers. Harold Schechter, in his book *The Serial Killer Files*, identifies this as

dehumanization and defines it as the capacity of human beings to deprive another of humanity by regarding them as outsiders, animals, are expendables (8). Also, like other serial killers, the process of dehumanization makes killing easier when murderers do not view their victims as human beings.

It can be envisaged that Gumb acts out of social and environmental influences that began in his childhood. Gumb's crimes are not the result of an innate, natural component of his psychological makeup. The intricacies of Gumb's psychopathology derives from his childhood. Lecter makes it clear to Starling that Gumb has not always been violent. Lecter says, "Buffalo Bill was not born a criminal; he was made into one through years of abuse" (Harris 212). The novel reveals that Gumb's mother was an aspiring movie star and model who failed to place in the Miss Sacramento Contest, in 1948, when she was only a month pregnant with Gumb. Consequently, she became an alcoholic and blamed Gumb for her failures, so she placed him in foster care at the age of two (Harris 357). Again, it is evident that Gumb's childhood abuse became a psychological facilitator in his madness, for he became consumed with the hardships of his mother's failures that led him into violent rage and self-hate. Megan Evans' article "Silence of the Sexes Gender Inversion in *The Silence of the Lambs*," argues that Gumb's crimes can also be attributed to Gumb's experience with sexual abuse as a kid. Evans suggests that Gumb was sexually abused by a male figure as a child, which explains why he covets the female form (25). Buried beneath Evans' premise is the suggestion that Gumb decides to become a female because he felt as though he was treated as one by



way of sexual abuse at the hands of a man. This transformation, into womanhood, will also serve as a coping mechanism to the abuse that contributed to his psychosis.

The primal seed of Gumb's criminal activity is to be also found in the declination and unheeded request for sex reassignment surgery due to his childhood psychological trauma. In his attempt to execute the proper procedure for his transformation, Gumb applied for sex reassignment surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland (the first hospital in America to perform SRS), the University of Minnesota (the second hospital to perform SRS), and Columbus Medical Center, which according to Lecter, are the three major surgical centers for transsexuals in America (Harris 165). In a conversation with Starling, Lecter offers the primary reason for Gumb's denied application. Lecter states, "The first reason would be a criminal record. This disqualifies an applicant unless the crime is relatively harmless and related to the gender-identity problem. Cross-dressing in public, something like that" (Harris 166). Lecter also added that severe psychological trauma led to the rejection of SRS. Gumb's criminal record was the result of his conviction for the murder of his grandparents when he was twelve-years-old (Harris 358). Because his request was denied by all three hospitals, this left Gumb envious and angry because he is existing in a body that he despises, and this also led to Gumb's mental demise. Therefore, Gumb is left with no other choice except to solicit other women for their skin and tailor his own female suit to his specifications.

David Cauldwell examines the sadistic behavior of transsexuals like Gumb in his article "Psychopathia Transsexualis" Cauldwell concludes that transsexualism is a genetically inherited disposition combined with a dysfunctional childhood, which results

in mental immaturity. He further notes, “when an individual who is unfavorably affected psychologically determines to live and appear as the opposite sex to which he or she does not belong, such an individual is what may be called a psychopathic transsexual.

According to Cauldwell, one is mentally unhealthy and because of this the person desires to live as a member of the opposite sex” (276). Cauldwell provides insight between Gumb's childhood trauma and gender dysphoria. In other words, Gumb's gender distress could have been triggered by his tumultuous childhood that included abuse and abandonment by his parents. Thus, the etiology of Gumb's mental condition, as Cauldwell suggests, could be inherited from his mother. Therefore, Gumb's gender dysphoria and transsexualism were not the sole causes of his mental impairment. In Gumb's case, it was his childhood trauma that served also as a triggering factor in his crimes.

Harris, in his novel, also establishes Gumb's psychological motive for his crimes by way of Lecter's tenuous opinion of Gumb's gender status when he states, Billy hates his own identity, you see, and he thinks that makes him a transsexual, but his pathology is a thousand times more savage and terrifying” (Harris 233). Lecter's conclusion regarding Gumb's motives suggests that Gumb is cognizant of the fact that he is *still* not a woman or female transsexual even though he is wearing female skin and body parts, which further adds to his violent rage. Even though he has not fully transformed, many psychiatrists still refer to those, in Gumb's situation, as transsexuals, specifically pre-operative transsexuals. In Amy B. Aronson and Michael S. Kimmel's book *Men and Masculinities: A- J*, Aronson defines pre-operative transsexuals as those who have not

undergone sex reassignment surgery. On the other hand, those who *have* undergone the surgical procedure are labeled as post-operative transsexuals. Bronson also shares that the pre-operative transsexuals are in the early stages of transformation when they begin taking hormones. Bronson lastly reveals that many individuals opt to remain pre-operative transsexuals (794; emphasis added). More explicitly, Gumb *can* be labeled as a pre-operative transsexual because his genitals have not been removed or reconstructed, but his medication (Premarin) and the skin and body parts of his victims, may still qualify his status as a transsexual. Either way, Gumb's character still evokes the most extreme form of gender dysphoria, which is his strong desire to reconstruct and eradicate his male genitalia. As stated earlier in the chapter, Gumb's attempted transformation, due to his gender dysphoria, serves as the motive that underpins his horrific murders that Agent Starling must put to an abrupt halt.

Gumb's journey to womanhood, fused by gender dysphoria, was truncated by Clarice Starling with the help of Hannibal Lecter. Harris disrupts Gumb's pleasure of abducting, murdering, and skinning women in order to construct himself a female suit when he exposes the grisly content of Gumb's capture, as Starling arrives at the home of Gumb. The novice FBI agent received a breakthrough from Jack Crawford unveiling Gumb's real name, as his alias was Louis Grant. While Gumb forces Martin (intended sixth victim) to moisturize her skin with lotion, his edict is interrupted by his doorbell, which he hesitantly answers only to discover Agent Clarice Starling at his door. As she enters his home, Starling recognizes that she is staring into the eyes of the serial killer for whom she has been searching since the beginning of the novel. The true horror of the

novel now emerges as Gumb runs away from Starling, and she is left searching for him after he turns off the lights. The suspenseful denouement of the novel occurs as Starling hears Gumb's gun cock, and she quickly turns around shooting him multiple times. With the lethal accuracy of Starling's gun, Thomas Harris' *The Silence of the Lambs* posits the pleasure of his audience witnessing the end of Gumb's career as a skilled couturier and serial killer, which resulted in the murder of five women. There is no scene that illustrates Gumb's karma better than Starling's climactic face-off with Gumb in his home that he once transformed into a dungeon of death. Such a conclusion also allows the reader to witness that Gumb's gender dysphoria still goes unassuaged because he suffers the ultimate consequence in the final scene, his *own* death. Unfortunately, for Gumb, he lived by the gun, and he died by the gun.

*Edward Theodore Gein "The Plainfield Butcher"*

Edward Theodore Gein's passage from babysitter and handyman to cold-blooded serial killer leapt to life on December 8, 1954. Gein, also known as the real-life Jame Gumb (Buffalo Bill), is also associated with the accouterments of womanhood in the form of gender dysphoria. Like Buffalo Bill, Gein took on the challenge to perform sex reassignment on his own. While Gumb's victims were young, overweight women, Gein preyed on older women who resembled his deceased mother. Gein's gender dysphoria became apparent after the death of his mother, Augusta Gein, in 1945. As Harold Schechter notes in his book *Deviant: The Shocking True Story of Ed Gein, the Original Psycho*, Gein was interested in transsexualism and dreamt of becoming a girl since

childhood (44). In order to satisfy, and as a treatment for his gender dysphoria, Gein took matters into his own hands and utilized the remains of deceased women in order to make his dream of becoming a woman a reality. In contrast to his literary counterpart, Jame Gumb, Gein wanted to become a specific woman, his mother. His road to transitioning began with his attempt bringing his mother back to the farm after her burial. On several nights, he drove to the Plainfield cemetery and attempted to exhume the grave of Mrs. Gein, but his efforts were unsuccessful (*Deviant* 44). In the midst of his failure, Gein did not give up. Gein's first victim, Mary Hogan was shot and dragged from her Town of Pine Grove Tavern. And then on November 16, 1954, another disappearance occurred. Fifty-eight-year-old Plainfield hardware store owner and widow Bernice Worden disappeared (*Deviant* 46).

On December 8, 1954, Gein killed Mary Hogan, the owner of a local tavern. The police were unable to solve the disappearance of Mary Hogan, but with the blood found at the tavern, they knew she was a victim of foul play (*Deviant* 68). On December 8, 1955, the editor of Plainfield newspaper *Sun*, Ed Marolla, ran a front-page column headlined "What Happened to Mary Hogan?" (*Deviant* 51). With the assistance of Hogan's son, police were able to rule Gein as a suspect in her disappearance. When police entered the farmhouse of Gein, on November 16, 1957, the horrifying discoveries caused Sheriff Art Schley to immediately rush outside and regurgitate. Deputy Sheriff Arnold Fritz discovered Hogan's face, skinned from the skull, softened with oil, and stuffed inside a paper sack. The three-year-old mystery of Hogan's disappearance had finally been solved (*Deviant* 81). One of the officers noticed an odd-looking soup bowl

on the kitchen table; it was the sawed-off, boiled clean top of a human skull. Detectives also discovered lampshades, belts made out of human skin and decorated with breasts nipples, and bracelets made out of human skin (*Deviant* 28).

Captain Lloyd Schoephoerster of the Green Lake County Sheriff's Department and Sheriff Art Schley, in Wautoma, became privy to the news that Bernice Worden's corpse had also been located at Gein's farm (*Deviant* 77-79). Mrs. Worden had been found in the woodshed of the old Gein farmhouse near Plainfield, Wisconsin. Her head and viscera had been found in the same location, her vulva in a box, and her heart in a plastic bag. Her head was found in a garbage sack on the floor (*Deviant* 87). Upon their arrival, the two officers discovered Mrs. Worden's decapitated and disemboweled body, which stunned them into silence. Plainfield officials reported that Gein had taken two ten-penny nails, bent them into hooks, connected them with a two-foot length of twine, and stuck one nail into each of Bernice Worden's ears. In this way, the head could be hung in Gein's bedroom as a trophy or wall ornament—the latest acquisition in Gein's collection of monstrous objects d'art (*Deviant* 82). In addition to the gruesome discoveries, Allan Willimovsky, Plainfield crime lab specialist, picked up an old shoebox, glanced inside, and realized that the box contained a large collection of female genitalia. According to Willimovsky, there were nine altogether, and one had been daubed with silver paint and trimmed with a red ribbon. Another box contained four human noses. And there was a Quaker Oats container filled with scraps of human head integument (*Deviant* 79). Deputy Fitz made the final shocking discovery of all was Gein's mask collection. The masks were actually facial skins that had been painstakingly peeled from the skulls of nine women.

They had no eyes, but the hair was still attached to their scalps. A few of the masks looked dried out, almost mummified. Others seemed more carefully preserved, as they had been treated with oil to keep the skin smooth. Some of the masks still had lipstick on their mouths and looked quite lifelike. One of the masks was the face of Mary Hogan. Gein also skinned the top part of a woman's body in order to make a vest (*Deviant* 80). Sheriff Schley and Crime Lab Director Charles Wilson said that the body parts recovered from Gein's home contained formaldehyde. Throughout the night, so many body parts were discovered—shinbones, scraps of skin, withered breasts, vaginas, lips, noses, heads, and more—that it was impossible to tell how many victims had supplied them (*Deviant* 81). Gein was arrested on the same day of the aforementioned grotesque discoveries. During his interrogation, Gein admitted to Crime Lab polygraph specialist Joe Wilimovsky that he would take female parts, specifically the vagina and place it over his penis to cover it (*Deviant* 122). Since Gein could not have his genitals surgically removed, the vulvas of women had to suffice.

As part of Gein's psychological evaluation, he also underwent the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory MMPI, the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Test, and the Rorschach Inkblot Test, which are the same tests that are administered to transgender individuals to determine candidacy for sex reassignment surgery (*Deviant* 161). John Borowski provides an accurate detail of Gein's confession to Wilimovsky in his book *The Ed Gein Files: A Psycho's Confession and Case Documents*:

Q. Do you have any recollection, Eddie, of taking any of those female parts, the vagina specifically, and holding it over your penis to cover the penis?

A. I believe that's true.

Q. You recall doing that with the vaginas of the bodies of other women?

A. That I believe I do remember; that's right. . .

Q. Would you ever put on a pair of women's panties over your body and then put some over your penis?

A. That could be. (42). Wilimovsky also reported that Gein would take the body parts and don one of the masks, slip into the torso skin vest, and attach himself to other parts from women's body and parade around the house by himself (*The Ed Gein Files* 51).

Another riveting part of Gein's confession included his admission to always removing the heads of his victims, not always their genitalia (*The Ed Gein Files* 123). Gein admitted to Wilimovsky that he needed the heads in order to make female masks out of them. Deputy Fritz said he did not know what would possess Gein to do such things (80). Wisconsin investigators speculated why he would commit murder with such a heinous Modus Operandi.

The genesis of Gein's psychopathology, mainly gender dysphoria, spliced rage into murder and brought the city of Plainfield face-to-face with its worst nightmare. This began after the death of his mother according to investigators; Gein became more and more mentally unhinged as time passed. As Paul Anthony Woods notes in his book *Ed Gein—Psycho*, Gein's motivation for the murders were hostility, sex, and a desire for a substitute for his mother in the form of a replica or body that could be kept indefinitely



(188). After the death of Augusta Gein, Edward Gein felt that he had nothing else to live for if he could not resurrect his one true love.

Investigators reported that Gein always wished that he had been a woman instead of a man. He purchased medical books and studied anatomy. Gein often wondered whether it would be possible to change his sex. He considered inquiring about a sex reassignment operation and even thought of trying the operation himself but did not carry out such plans (*Deviant* 133). It can be concluded that Gein did not follow through with sex reassignment aspirations because the first sex reassignment surgery clinic, in America, did not open until 1966 at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. By this time, Gein had already been apprehended, in 1957, for “taking matters into his own hands.” As Mark Timothy notes in his book *The Ed Gein Story*, when Gein was not at Mary Hogan’s tavern, Gein spent a lot of time in solitude indulging in many fantasies regarding sex reassignment surgery. As Timothy notes, Gein became fascinated with World War II veteran Christine Jorgensen who traveled to Denmark in order to undergo sex reassignment surgery in 1952. Jorgensen became the first known transsexual woman in the United States according to the *New York Times*. This caused Gein to be inspired and intrigued by the procedure, so he often wondered what he would look like as a woman. Woods also revealed that Gein did not move forward with the sex change because he could not afford to do so (24). For the most part, Gein was determined to become a transsexual, just like Gumb, by any means necessary.

During his interrogation, Gein claimed that the grave-robbing was motivated by his intellectual curiosity. He said he wanted to learn human anatomy firsthand (*Deviant*

101). On Thursday, November 21, 1957, the story broke in the *Milwaukee Journal*, the headline read: “Obsessive Love for His Mother Drove Gein to Slay, Robe Graves; Ghoulish Acts Were Stirred by Her Death: He Thought Victims Resembled Parent” (*Deviant* 132). Unbeknownst to the residents of Plainfield, the Gein farm was in the process of becoming an incubator for deviance and madness and caused Gein's growing derangement after the death of Mrs. Gein. In the same way, Edward J. Kelleher, of Chicago Municipal Court's Psychiatric Institute, described that Gein's madness resulted from his sexual psychopathy, which included acute forms of transvestism, fetishism, and necrophilia (qtd. in *Deviant* 134). Gein's mental distress and criminal acts, according to Kelleher, was also a result of a distressing incident during his childhood. Gein recalled witnessing his mother beat a puppy to death, and his mother's death tipped him over the edge (*Deviant* 161). During his murder trial, Gein articulates his own *reductio ad absurdum* as he suggested that he was driven by an evil spirit and his power to raise the dead; he also told the jury that everyone had their own tastes, and his was for corpses (*Deviant* 173). Gein also claimed that he did not remember details of the crimes because he had been in a dazed state at the time and leading up to the murders. As Gein confessed to his crimes, he did so in a cheerful manner, expressing no remorse. He seemed to have no concept of the severity of his crimes (Borowski 68). The FBI disavows Gein's claim of being in a dazed state and not knowing the severity of his crimes. According to the FBI, serial killers are neither delusional nor confused; they understand the difference between right and wrong, and they know the nature and quality of their criminal acts. Lastly, as mentioned in chapter two, the FBI contends that serial killers are also capable

of controlling their impulse to kill but choose not to do so (*FBI Serial Murder Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators* 419). All things considered, Gein believed that he was doing no harm, especially to the corpses, as he attempted to use their body parts for his own gratification, the reincarnation of Augusta Gein.

Gein's crimes were also the consequences of a lethal linkage between his mother's actions, while she was alive, and his own mental decline. Not only was Gein trying to recreate his mother, as Robert H. Gollmar reveals, in his book, *Edward Gein: America's Most Bizarre Murderer*, he was also inspired by his mother's acts during his childhood that he also wanted to imitate. Gollmar explains that when Gein was eight-years-old, he found his mother and father covered in blood, with a pig carcass hung upside down. He also watched his mother slice the pig open, right down the center as the guts came gushing out. Gein stood in astonishment, as this took place (37). Gollmar's revelation illustrates the strong influence that Gein's mother had on his life, including crime. Mrs. Gein's method of butchering pigs became Gein's MO in butchering women. Gein's crimes also conflate with Criminologist Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory explained in his article "Building on the Foundation of General Strain Theory," that is featured in the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. Agnew defines GST as the strains or stressors that increase the likelihood of anger and frustration. In Gein's case, his mother was the source of his anger and frustration and loneliness. Mrs. Gein forbade her sons to enjoy or be in the presence of the opposite sex. If Gein was caught acting in a sinful way, she would punish them by pouring boiling hot water over them (Timothy 58). As a result of his mother's stipulations, Gein only fantasized of being in a woman's

company, which ignited his obsession with the female body. The deprivation of female companionship drove Gein further into an obsession with women. Moreover, Agnew's theory contextualizes Gein's behavior and illustrates that his crimes were meant to assuage the absence of a romantic counterpart. Hence, it must be considered that Gein desired female companionship, but he could not act on his urges from the fear of being punished by his overbearing mother.

Roy Hazelwood, criminal profiler of sex crimes, also provides insight into the motives of Gein's squeamish desires and criminal behavior in his book *The Evil That Men Do: FBI Profiler Roy Hazelwood's Journey into the Minds of Sexual Predators*. Hazelwood also confirmed that Gein was an emotional child with sexual fantasies and urges and also suffered from schizophrenia his entire life. Hazelwood insists that Gein dug graves until that no longer satisfied him, so he started hunting human beings (77). Gein's gradual move from grave digging to hunting humans is what the FBI refers to as "escalation" or the "graduation effect" (*The Serial Killer Files* 88). Kimberly Kempf, in her article "Crime Severity and Criminal Career Progression," discusses escalation in detail. According to Kempf, individuals, like Gein, who engage in serious crime at an early age, are likely to continue their offenses. Kempf continues to include her findings from the Rand Corporation Habitual Criminals Program that states that criminal severity definitely escalates over time. Lastly, Kempf notes a finding from the National Academy of Sciences Panel on research on Criminal Careers, which states that belief in escalation is probably the most widely held view of the pattern of criminal careers (524-526). In the case of Gein, the escalation of his behavior ensued from corpses to humans.

Gein's attempted recreation of his mother and becoming her was doomed for failure, so humans were his last resort. While Hazelwood and other law enforcement officials report and provide the motives of Gein's psychosis, it could also be argued that Gein, instead of loving his mother and hating other women, he indeed loved the women (platonically or romantically), in his life, but resented his mother for isolating him and his brother (Henry). Furthermore, his victims could have been symbolic of his deceased mother who he resented for segmenting him into a world that only encompassed her and her Manichaeian dualistic preaching. As stated in the introduction, Mrs. Gein would reiterate to her sons that the world was an evil place; all women were impure, and she was the only good in their lives. In brief, Gein was only murdering his mother when he killed Bernice Worden and Mary Hogan; they were symbols of his disdain for Mrs. Gein, so their deaths became reassertions and expressions of his hatred towards Augusta Gein. The bodies that Gein exhumed were symbolic of Gein resurrecting and murdering his mother all over again when he would butcher their remains.

*Ed Gein the Real Leatherface Serial Killer* documentary suggests Gein's crimes and psychological impairment can be attributed to his unhealthy relationship with his mother and his upbringing. Gein suffered from conflicting feelings about women, his natural sexual attraction to them and the unnatural attitudes his mother had instilled in him caused him great confusion (*Ed Gein Documentary* 00:10:26-49). His love-hate feeling towards women became exaggerated and eventually developed into full-blown psychosis. His love and desire for other women were accounted for by his girlfriend of twenty years, Adeline Watkins. Watkins revealed her twenty-year romance with Gein in

an interview with the *Minneapolis Tribune*. Gein's ex-girlfriend also claimed that Gein proposed marriage, but Watkins declined because something was wrong with her, not him (*Deviant* 113). Gein also admitted that he would not have gotten into his present difficulty if he would have married, if the neighbors had treated him better, or if he could have sold his farm and traveled (Timothy 92). This is not to say that Gein did not love his mother at some point, but he employed murder as his way of eradicating the regret he had for not forging romantic relationships and leading a more social life, which also caused him to be socially and romantically inept. Finally, as the FBI suggests, crimes such as the ones committed by Gein and Gumb were forms of expression rather than instrumental acts of violence (*Serial Murder Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives for Investigation* 415). Both killers committed their crimes in order to express their love/hate relationship towards the opposite sex, as they failed to become women.

Both the fantasy of becoming women and crafting their own transformation serves as the elision in the possibility of both serial killers forging a complete reinvention of their deceased mothers. Jame Gumb ("Buffalo Bill") and Edward Gein ("The Plainfield Butcher"), respectively, are precarious human beings who were defined by their desire to become something other than what they were, women. Their illegitimate sex transformations, then, gesture, their stigmas as mentally ill men who experience gender dysphoria, which is their belief that they are transsexuals. However, as both killers underwent the process of transformation, they are also transforming into something more morbid, *dead* men. The shooting, skinning, and wearing of women's skin ushered them into their own deaths in addition to the ones that they inflicted on their victims. So, as

they were crafting women's suits out of the skin of dead women, they were surely crafting their own doom in which they were killing themselves in the process. As stated earlier in the chapter, Agent Clarice Starling preempted the future deaths of women by killing Gumb at the end of the novel, and Gein was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to Central State Hospital in Waupun, Wisconsin, by Judge Herbert A. Bunde, on January 16, 1958. Judge Bunde declared Gein legally insane and also declared that Gein would never be at liberty again, which constituted his social death before his physical death. Reporter Harry S. Pease said, "the world will be a better place for his absence" (*Deviant* 205). In 1978, Gein was transferred to Mendota Mental Health Institute in Madison, Wisconsin, where he remained until his death on July 26, 1984, at the age of seventy-seven due to complications from cancer and respiratory failure. He was buried in Plainfield Cemetery next to his mother and not far from the graves he robbed in the prior years. (Timothy 87). The putative, seemingly normal momma's boy, baby sitter, and handyman was no longer the source of Plainfield's nightmares and all-year-round Halloween stories, and his literary counterpart, Jame Gumb, was no longer alive in order to sew his way into womanhood at the expense of innocent women. Both characters appeared to have had love/hate relationships with their mothers. While Gein, especially, loved his mother, the serial killers in the next chapter felt the exact opposite for their creators; they harbored sole hate and resentment. Their hatred served as the motivation to their murderous quests, as they felt abandoned and rejected, and the only way to accomplish revenge was to kill their creators, which served as the fatal countdown

to the day of destroying their creators. The destruction of creators, as a result of rejection, which led to mother hate, will be the focus of my next chapter.



## CHAPTER V

### REVENGE IN MARY SHELLEY'S *FRANKENSTEIN* AND EDMUND KEMPER III, MODERN DAY FRANKENSTEIN

This chapter explains the issue of rejection and isolation as the psychological motivator in the crimes of the Monster “The Switzerland Strangler” in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and its real-life counterpart Edmund Kemper III “The Co-ed Butcher.” In analyzing the psychological processes, which drove these killers to serial murder, it is useful to examine the killers’ feelings of isolation and rejection, at the hands of their parents, that drove them into murdering not only strangers but their creators as well. In analyzing their motives for murder, the Monster and Kemper utilize their feelings of isolation and rejection to justify their heinous deeds. Therefore, I argue that the poisonous self-deprecation that flowed into their psyche is painful evidence of their unsolved about their self-worth. Frankenstein’s creature and Kemper murdered the individuals who were closest to their creators in order to suit their need for revenge against them.

To the shame of the good name of Geneva, Switzerland, there was an individual who once tarnished the name of Switzerland’s peace capital—the Monster in Mary Shelley’s most acclaimed novel *Frankenstein*. Shelley creates a character, who caused the name of Geneva to be a place of panic and horror. From the outset of this work, the Monster, because of his horrific and monstrous appearance, feels abandoned and

alienated by the person who creates him. As the story begins, Victor Frankenstein is pursuing his dream of becoming a scientist in Munich, Germany, by studying the bodies of humans, exhuming the desecrated remains from graves, and cut up the bodies to study. There he endeavors to make dead things come to life in hopes of contributing something positive to mankind; however, the antithesis of Frankenstein's aspirations materialized, as he states, "I didn't know that my study of science would someday destroy my life and all that I loved" (Shelley 16). Frankenstein's attempt at anthropomorphism catapults into tragedy when he loses those who are closest to him throughout the novel.

Victor Frankenstein appeared to have been destined for a life of turmoil, as Shelley foreshadows Victor's ill-fate by way of the physical and emotional toll that his work has taken on him, as the narrator says, "What he was doing made him sick, but he kept working" (22). Although distressed, Frankenstein is in a situation wherein there is no turning back, so the only way out is to keep assembling his creation that will soon bring the Frankenstein's great calamity. Shelley's epistolary novel is structured as mariner Robert Walton writes letters to his sister, Mrs. Saville, in England, recounting dialogue with Victor Frankenstein. Frankenstein shares the story of his countless days and nights studying decaying human forms, and after two years of assembling the creature, he succeeds in bringing his concoction to life. Unfortunately, tragedy befalls Frankenstein, and a heart-piercing nightmare occurs when he discovers the creature's physical deformities and hulky appearance. Frankenstein says:

How can I describe this thing I had worked so hard to make? He was very tall. I had chosen his face as beautiful. Beautiful? How wrong could I have been? His long hair was black and shiny. His teeth were white and perfect. But these things made the rest of him seem even more horrible. His yellow skin barely covered what was underneath it. His yellow eyes almost matched the color of his skin. He had straight black lips. (Shelley 23)

Disappointment, repulsion, and disgust overtake Victor causing him to retire in haste from his workroom when he spots his creation. Frankenstein says, “He reached toward me. Maybe he wanted to stop me from running . . . I knew I couldn’t go back to my house where the creature waited” (Shelley 24). It is evident, or so it seems, that Frankenstein is not only repulsed and petrified by *what* he sees, especially when he says, “all beauty is gone.” Victor is also terrified by the fact that he will not be able to control his creation as he did while it was under construction, as the Monster was too large for him to control. Carina Brannstrom’s mentions in her article “Alienation in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*,” that the Monster is the symbol of social rejection. Because of this, it revolts against society because of its monstrous, repulsive appearance (3). Hence, Frankenstein is more afraid than excited about him. The Monster's anger and frustration towards his creator force him to avenge his own misery, which results in the murder of William Frankenstein (Frankenstein's brother), Elizabeth Frankenstein (Frankenstein's wife), and Henry Clerval (Frankenstein's best friend). Unbeknownst to Victor, the nightmare does not stop at the sight of his creation, for the Monster would destroy his life and take the ones of the others that he loved and cherished.

Throughout Shelley's work, the creature's entire essence is comprised of attaining love and acceptance. As time passes, his desire for love becomes so dire that he begins to destroy the individuals who Victor loves and eventually the doctor himself. This began the catastrophic occurrences that would destroy the lives of Victor Frankenstein and all of those he loved. After his creation murders his loved ones, Victor states that he no longer wanted to study science because it reminded him of his creation, so he studied history and languages with his best friend Henry Clerval (Shelley 27). Halting his study of science and gravitating to the study of history would not suffice in ending the terror that belied the Frankenstein family and their close friends. The creature's method of revenge began with Victor Frankenstein's youngest brother William. After leaving the cottage that he inhabited, the creature saw Frankenstein's youngest brother wandering in the woods after he became lost, so the Monster approaches him in hopes of forging a friendship. Unfortunately, for the Frankenstein's, this encounter turns fatal as William screams when he saw the Monster. Williams cries, "Let me go, monster! Ugly wretch! You wish to eat and tear me to pieces—You are an ogre—Let me go, or I will tell my papa" (Shelley 38). After William desperately tries to escape, the Monster tries to convince him that he means no harm. In order to silence William, the Monster grasps his throat. The Monster says to Victor, "As soon as I heard the name, I became angry. 'Frankenstein?' I cried. 'You belong to him? I promised myself I would get even with Frankenstein. And I will start with you! . . . I tried to quiet him I grabbed his throat. But I am so strong, and the child was so small. . . in a moment he was dead" (Shelley 49).

The first line of Alphonse Frankenstein's (Victor's father) letter, Victor received while in Germany, was heart-shattering to him. The letter stated that his youngest brother was dead, and he had been murdered. The novel states, "The letter explained that the family had been walking together near Lake Geneva, and William had gotten lost. They found him in the woods. My father wrote that William had the print of the murderer's finger on his neck" (Shelley 28). It can be seen in William's murder, and the subsequent ones, that the Monster's *Modus Operandi* is strangulation. The Monster's crime offers a striking example of his need to diminish his own misery by seeking revenge on his creator. William's death also foreshadows the notion that the only way that the creature can overcome his life of rejection is by murdering the loved ones of his creator. Thus, Victor knew that it was his creation that murdered his younger brother. Unfortunately, he could not explain this to the police because they would have labeled him as insane and imprisoned him. Victor says, "And I couldn't tell the truth to the police in Geneva. They would call me a madman and lock me up. No one would believe that a creature I had made from lifeless parts had killed my youngest brother" (Shelley 30). Of course, this occurrence represents a low part in the lives of the Frankensteins. Justine, Victor's adopted sister, was blamed for the murder. She stood trial and was hanged a few days after William's death (Shelley 31). The Monster admits to Victor that William's murder was his way of "getting back" at Victor for rejecting him. The Monster states, "At first, I felt bad. Then I was filled with joy. I even clapped my hands in hellish joy. This child belonged to your family. I would show you. I would bring as much sadness to you as you had me" (Shelley 49). As Shirley Lynn Scott notes in her article titled "What Makes

Serial Killers Tick?" Scott proposes that victims of serial killers are seen by them as symbolic objects (27). For this reason, the Monster associates Frankenstein's loved ones with his inner conflict or rejection and isolation. This occurrence is the catalyst of the bitter war between the Monster and Frankenstein and also created the criminal platform for the monster to hunt for his next victim as no one suspected him as the murderer except his creator.

*Frankenstein* clearly fits the dichotomy of rejection and revenge towards the creator. His vengeful nature is also evident when he murders Victor's wife Elizabeth on their wedding night. In an effort to assuage his loneliness and isolation, the Monster admonishes Victor to construct a female counterpart, and he would be gone forever and not bother him again; however, Victor does not hold to his promise, which further enrages the Monster (Shelley 52). Victor broke his promise to the Monster after realizing that she, too, might inflict panic and terror among the Frankenstein's, so he destroys his second project before it is completed. The Monster told Victor that he would be present on his wedding night, and the creature did fulfill his promise. While Victor and Elizabeth were on their honeymoon, he heard his new bride cry out. Victor says, "I was in the basement when I heard Elizabeth scream. Suddenly, I knew that the monster wasn't planning to kill me. He was after Elizabeth. I ran upstairs and into our bedroom. Elizabeth was lying across the bed, dead. Finger marks were on her neck" (Shelley 59). A few days later, Victor's father died of a broken heart after Elizabeth's murder. When the Monster murders his second victim (Elizabeth), Shelley hereby articulates the creature's inability to endure his feelings of loneliness and isolation, which serves as a

psychological facilitator in committing his crimes as mentioned earlier. The Monster states, “Life has made me a killer. I would have been like an angel. But after you gave me life, you left me. You turned away from me. I have been evil because I am unhappy” (Shelley 34).

The Monster’s reasoning behind his life of evil is explained by Criminal Profiler John Douglas in his book *Anatomy of Motive*. Douglas suggests that serial killers are made rather than born (38). With this in mind, the theme of nature versus nurture is explored. The Monster suggests to his creator that he is inherently good; however, he is converted to madness and evil by those who do not love him, which includes Victor and the DeLacey family. On the other hand, the Monster is suggesting that his environment and life has shaped him into the killer that he is. As the Monster suggests that his environment is the precipitator of his crimes, The National Center for Crisis Management and the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress supports his suggestion as well as Douglas’. They propose that DNA (nature) does not create a psycho killer, so the main focus of criminologists and psychologists are the origins and the surroundings of a killer’s childhood and their environment (nurture) (2). Because of society’s treatment (rejection) of the Monster, he feels he must reciprocate mankind with the same treatment, which in his case, is violence.

The Monster’s third victim is Henry Clerval—Victor’s best friend. The novel states, “There they found the body of a man. He was a good-looking man who was about twenty-five-years old. At first, they thought he had drowned. But his clothes weren’t wet. They took him to a nearby cottage. In the light, they say that he had been murdered. The

marks of the murderer's fingers were still on his neck" (Shelley 57). In the judge's office, three men said they spotted a handsome man. His body had three fingers around his neck. Victor was accused of murdering Henry at first. "Then I saw the body. It was Henry! The monster had killed my best friend! The room around me went black as I passed out and fell to the floor" (Shelley 58). The concentrated hatred towards his creator—positions Henry to be the Monster's third victim. Even though Victor had the hopes of creating life, through the Monster, he creates the avenues of death. Murder creates a constant banter of vengeance between the Monster and Victor Frankenstein.

While the creature turns to crime for revenge, he is able to communicate his reasons for doing so as he meets him on a mountain. His disdain for Frankenstein is the reason he provides for the murder of Frankenstein's loved ones. The Monster says to Victor, "I thought you'd act this way. People always hate those who are low and unlucky. And I am the *unluckiest* creature of all" (Shelley 32; emphasis added). As the Monster, of haunting appearance, laments to his maker, he is aware that Victor hates him, and this makes him "unlucky." In this case, the monster incessantly blames Victor for his criminal activities. He states, "Life has made me a killer, and I am evil because I am unhappy" (Shelley 33). For "The Switzerland Strangler," it is necessary to attribute responsibility for his actions onto other sources besides himself. In his case, he attributes life and his creator (Victor Frankenstein) as the key motivators of his crimes. As a result of the Monster's feelings of abandonment and neglect, it can be concluded that he suffers from social alienation and lacking the ability to forge other relationships. For this reason, he feels helpless and inadequate. The Monster is mercilessly ostracized and now demonized



by his creator, which according to him, makes him a murderous creation. The creature has become who he is because he now knows that society views him as a beast, and of course, an outcast. Everywhere he goes, he is beaten, and people run from him. John Douglas suggests, in his article “Serial Killers Need to Be in Control,” that inadequacy is a factor in most serial killers. They also feel insignificant and powerless. They figure they can get it all back. They can get power by controlling others. They can feel important, like they’ve accomplished something (3).

Parallel to Douglas’ theory, Fox and Levin offer an appendage to Douglas’ theory in their article “Multiple Homicide Pattern of Serial and Mass Murder,” The authors conclude that the impetus of power and control is to have complete control over their victims. Fox and Levin also state that regardless of whether the critical component is the stimulus (the direct infliction of pain) or the response (the victim’s suffering itself), the fundamental objective in the actions of the sadistic serial killer is to achieve complete mastery over his victims (416). In other words, humiliation, enslavement, and terror are vehicles for attaining total domination over another human being, which is a coping mechanism for isolation and rejection. Victor became enslaved to the Monster in his constant worry towards trying to halt his crime spree. Also, Frankenstein’s happiness and freedom were also eradicated by the monster because he constantly mourned the death of his loved ones and close friends (Henry). The Monster’s infliction of terror upon Victor was the most obvious because fear deprived Frankenstein of the chance to take pride in his creation and further projects. Victor’s terror, moreover, was also heightened by the fact that he was trying to not become a victim of his own creation throughout the novel.

Thus, the psychological pleasure that his progeny experienced through murdering his family and friends was the result of the agony and pain that Victor Frankenstein suffered while in constant regret of creating him. Without a doubt, Victor's bondage, fueled with regret, played an important role in the Monster's ability to dominate and control the aspiring scientist both emotionally and fatally. With this considered, the Monster feels like an outcast to society, so he must gain control over his oppressor/s by any means necessary. The only thing the Monster wants is to escape his life of isolation and alienation and a wife to love him and vice versa. It is important to mention that Victor had good intentions of creating life, through the monster. Instead, he creates a creature that inflicts death upon his loved ones, so this creates a constant violent banter between the Monster and Victor Frankenstein. The Monster sees himself as the victim because his hope of being accepted has been shattered by his creator and society, so murder is the only way that he can execute his revenge by deciding who lives and who should be destroyed.

Again, the Monster's motive, which is revenge on his creator, is revealed in the murders of William, Henry, and Elizabeth. Frankenstein's creation's road to violence is also thoroughly reflected in Criminologist Lonnie Athens' theory of violentization. Richard Rhodes includes Athens' theory, in his book titled *Why They Kill: The Discoveries of a Maverick Criminologist*, which creates the framework of violence as a process. Athens postulates that violence is the result of a four-stage "violentization process: brutalization, belligerency; violent performance; dominance and virulence. According to Athens, during stage one (brutalization), there are three elemental

experiences; violent subjugation; personal horrification; violent coaching. All three add up to coarse and cruel treatment by others with lasting and dramatic impacts. Stage two (belligerence) is when the individual is eager to do something about the violent treatment, the decision is made to resort to violence if necessary to stop the treatment. According to Athens, the person resolves to use “serious violence” if provoked and if it has a chance of success. At the third stage (violent performance), this is the transition from a resolution to use violence to its actual use. Athens concludes that this is a crucial phase in the process of violentization. The intentional injuring of another human being for the first time in one’s life is not as casual a matter as those who have not seriously contemplated, much less performed, such action might believe. As the individual transitions into the fourth stage (virulence), there is an extreme readiness to execute violence and attack others with minimal or no provocation. Lastly, Athens surmises that poverty, genetic inheritance, or psychopathology are casual factors in crime; it is simply the process of violentization (10).

As the creature, in *Frankenstein*, serves as a literary reflection of Athens' theory of violentization through all four stages: a) He is instantly scorned by his creator (stage one). As stated earlier, Frankenstein hurries into another room when he first sees the Monster. This is also the stage that generates emotions of rage and anger in individuals. The creature’s hopeless situation catapults him into a ruthless offender, which is a variable (stage two) in Athens’ theory. “If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear” (Shelley 33). Here, the beast is inspired to live a life of violence because of the mistreatment that he faces and uses violence as a solution to his social marginalization.

Also, murder becomes a solution for the Monster because he wants Frankenstein to endure pain and suffering just as he did, and the only way to accomplish this is to kill the people he loves—and eventually Victor. “I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend.” The Monster’s actual execution of violence (stage three) began with William, which can be construed as Victor’s “warning,” but the climax of the novel was the murder of Elizabeth Frankenstein—Victor’s wife. As Victor destroyed the possibility of the Monster’s companion, this further enraged him. “I am alone and miserable. Only someone as ugly as I am could love me” (Shelley 34). In this case, the creature expresses his inability to cope with his tragic social experiences, in tangible terms of his misery that also stigmatized him as an “eyesore” to others, especially his creator. The creature reflects stage four (virulence) at the time that he murders William; however, his will to kill heightens after each murder, especially after Frankenstein destroys his female companion. The Monster’s violence and eagerness to kill circumvents the recognition that he is incomplete and fragmented. The Monster believes that the creation of a companion would sustain him emotionally and socially. Much to his chagrin, his creator destroyed his hopes, so the creature had to execute his deviant acts as a way to avenge his misery.

As Athens further notes, the violentization process may be stretched out over many years or may be compressed into a short period of a few years. He further suggests that there is also a possibility that the entire process could be completed in a few months, which can be witnessed in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. The creature’s violent evolution was indeed instantaneous because he felt the need for immediate retaliation. Thus, the

primary motivator, in the monster's case, was retaliation against his creator—Victor Frankenstein. In the novel, the Monster is “getting back” at Victor *and* a society that he feels deserving of his violent wrath. It is evident that the beast delights in the devastation and sorrow that the Frankenstein's will endure. Furthermore, like other serial murderers, he has developed a fantasy that involves an obsession with watching Victor—his creator—suffer. Here one witnesses a significant element of the killer's true feelings of self-hate, resentment, and inadequacy. The Monster feels scorned and abandoned by his creator, and sometimes by those individuals, like the DeLacey's that he met along the way. This family has what he desires, which is companionship and love. The Monster recounts, to Victor, that while hiding out in a nearby hut, he observed three people living in another cottage: an old man (Mr. DeLacey), a young man (Felix), and a young woman (Safie). The Monster states, “These must be the luckiest people in the world” (Shelley 37). He shared with Victor that when they were happy, he also felt happy. He also learned to read as he observed Felix teaching Safie how to read. Unfortunately, the Monster's reliability on Mr. DeLacey (the blind father) for companionship was shattered when Felix and Alex returned to the cottage and beat the Monster with a stick, which caused him to run from the cottage. The Monster says, “Then the three young people walked in and saw me. Agatha fainted, and Safie ran screaming from the cottage. Felix tore me away from the old man. He picked up a stick and began to hit me. I could have torn him to pieces. But I thought how much I loved the DeLacys” (Shelley 44). The Monster's inability to inflict harm upon the family that he grew fond has been labeled by Alan Fox and Jack Levin as compartmentalization. As noted in chapter two, serial killers

separate individuals with whom they have no relationship and destroy them with no regard for their feelings (“Multiple Homicide: Patterns of Serial and Mass Murder “). In this case, the Monster develops a deep affection for this family because he has learned how to read, and he has learned the concept of love by observing the DeLacy's. On the other hand, the creature has no relationship with his victims.

Constant rejection propels the Monster to a life of crime as he maintains that his heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy” (Shelley 29). Peter Vronsky, in his book *The Serial Killer Phenomenon: The Definitive History of Serial Murder*, also renders an explanation for the Monster's rage due to his rejection. Vronsky states that the anonymity factor creates a serial killer. Vronsky further explains that feelings of disenfranchised, forgotten, ignored in the looming crowd, serial killers murder those who mirror back his own forgotten, anonymous identity but makes a name for himself or becomes “somebody” in the process (241). Frankenstein's monstrous progeny feels that Victor is to blame for his life of scorn and rejection. But to feel rejected by one's own creator drives him to kill everyone that Victor loves. Put plainly, Victor must suffer the consequences for the monster's misery. He is also infuriated by the fact that Victor dared to indulge in happiness by marrying Elizabeth.

From the creature's invention, feelings of hatred and anger create the psychological motivators in the murder of his victims: William, Henry, and Elizabeth. As stated earlier, he has a dire need for companionship and a grave resentment for Frankenstein's early demise can be attributed to making it his life's mission to avenge the death of his loved ones by killing the creature. The dehumanization of the monster is also

evident because the Monster is never named in the novel; he is simply called by what he is—a monster. In this regard, the Monster and his creator mirror each other because both of them are outcasts and isolated. Victor isolates himself by choice while creating his monstrous progeny. Frankenstein has chosen a life of solitude on his own; he does not communicate with his family for six years. Victor's state of isolation is magnified after the Monster murders William because he is worried about the opinion of others if he revealed that the Monster murdered his loved ones. Therefore, Victor becomes a prisoner to his own creation. In comparison, the Monster is dehumanized by Victor and others, so his sole purpose in life is to obtain vengeance and inflict pain. In brief, Victor's isolation is voluntary, but the Monster's is inflicted upon him by society and his creator as mentioned earlier in the chapter.

The motive for the Monster's murder is also documented in Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory, which is featured in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia: Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Agnew contends that strains and environmental stressors can serve as pre-crime stressors in the lives of serial murderers like the Monster in *Frankenstein* because they increase the likelihood of negative emotions like anger and frustration. These emotions create pressure for corrective action, and crime is possibly one response. Crime may be a method for reducing strain (e.g. seeking revenge). In addition, Agnew provides the main categories of experiences that can trigger strain: a. The loss of positive stimuli (e.g. loss of a romantic partner or friend); b. The presence of negative stimuli (e.g. physical assaults and verbal insults); c. New categories of goal blockage (e.g. the failure to achieve justice goals) “connections” (3-5). With this in

mind, the social strain that the Monster endures creates the impetus of violent aggression in Frankenstein's Monster and his real-life resemblance in murder.

In the case of the Monster, there was never any positivity in his life, in the form of people to love, in which he could seek refuge. The creature, in Shelley's story, never loss a romantic partner or friend because, much to his chagrin, he never had one. As a solution to his isolation and frustration, the beast *did* admonish Victor to create him a female companion, "I am alone, and everyone runs from me. I want company. I want someone as ugly as I am. Frankenstein, you will create another like me. But this one will be a woman. You will make a wife for me" (Shelley 50). Even though the creature had already killed William (Victor's younger brother), it can be concluded that he did not want to murder anyone else; all he wanted was a bride in order to fill his void. Unfortunately, Victor's inability to fulfill his expectations became a causal factor in the monster's continuation of murder; Victor destroyed the monster's female counterpart before he could finish. Consequently, Victor's rejection for the monster generated motivations for him to prey on his next victims, which included Elizabeth Frankenstein (Victor's wife) and Henry Clerval (Victor's best friend). "The woman was almost finished. I looked up. There, at the window, was the monster! He had followed me. He was watching me as I worked. He had a horrible smile on his face. He was waiting for his wife. Suddenly, the whole thing made me sick. I couldn't go through with my plans. I couldn't let these two things loose in the world" (Shelley 55). The Monster's thwarted aspirations and social exclusion spurred his desire to murder as a result of the communal deprivation that he endured.



For the creature in Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, he used murder as a form of manipulation and control over Victor Frankenstein, his creator as reflected in the novel, there was a grave amount of frustration, resentment, and the inability to adapt to the rejection that he experienced from the beginning. Undoubtedly, the creature was the symbol of an unwanted life in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. He deemed himself as low and unlucky because he was always divorced from the feelings of love and acceptance by his own creator, which according to him, justified his murderous actions. Victor's monstrous progeny strove furiously to sow his pockets of frustration on individuals in order to intimidate and impose fear upon Frankenstein. The creature remained distant and isolated because of the scorn that he felt from the person that created him.

At the conclusion of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley eloquently displays the doom of both Victor and his murdering creation. Both Victor and the creature die in isolation, loneliness, and with the desire to avenge their misery. Shelley reveals a significant aspect of revenge in her novel. The Monster was not satisfied until the main culprit of his sadness and melancholy was dead. The creature states, "But now he is dead. It is over. I have returned to my right mind ... I am finished with evil. It is over now. No other person will die at my hands. It is time for me to die. And I will take care of that quickly ... I will float away to the land of ice and snow. Without food, even shall I die. I shall die as I lived, alone, without love, and hated by all" (72-74). In any event, the Monster's life of crime still did not suffice in "getting even" with his creator, so he must now kill himself, as a means to totally eradicate his feelings of loneliness and hopelessness. There is no textual evidence that the Monster physically murdered his creator; however, he *does*

cause Victor to die of grief, as he murdered his loved ones. Just as Alphonse Frankenstein (Victor's father) grieved himself to death, the monster foresaw that the same would eventually happen to Victor, especially if he proceeded to kill his loved ones. He says, "I have killed him, too. . . With him it is ended" (Shelley 71). Shortly thereafter, the Monster also disappears. In the novel's conclusion, Shelley exposes her readers to a softer side of a seemingly heartless monster who is now feeling sadness and emptiness. As a result, the creature disappears and is never seen again. The death of the protagonist (Victor) and the antagonist (the Monster), attests to the psychological motivator of rejection. Throughout the novel, there is a clear recognition that Victor wants to kill the monster and vice versa. After the monster's multiple attempts to feel loved, he still feels incomplete and unedified by his creator. As a solution, the Monster finally completes his mission by killing his creator and then disappearing into the Arctic Ocean. Finally, the breach in connection, with Frankenstein, was enough to ignite the need for violent revenge, and violence became the source root and the means by which his real-life reflection, Edmund Kemper III, who made six co-ed girls the major beneficiaries of his hatred towards *his* creator—Clarnell Kemper.

*Edmund Emil Kemper III "The Co-ed Butcher"*

Edmund Emil Kemper III shared both physical and psychological characteristics with the antagonist in *Frankenstein*. Like Frankenstein's Monster, Kemper is tall, burly, and his hulking, monstrous appearance segmented him from others including his own family. Just like Victor Frankenstein's creature endeavored to destroy his creator,

Kemper set out to destroy his (his mother) *and* everyone who she loved and resembled her. Frankenstein's creation said to him, "Frankenstein, you are my creator, yet you hate me" (Shelley 33). This was also the case of Edmund Emil Kemper III, who experienced the same hatred and disdain from his creator (his mother, Clarnell Kemper) as a young child. Kemper shares many characteristics with Frankenstein's monster. Just like the Monster, Kemper was ostracized because of his gargantuan stature and hefty appearance. These physical traits cause them to be stigmatized as an outcast by his own mother as well as others. At a very early age, Mrs. Clarnell Stranberg Kemper isolated her son into a social corner of self-hate and resentment towards her and eventually society. Because of the constant rejection, Kemper felt compelled to seek revenge on his creator, Clarnell Stranberg Kemper.

When Kemper was eight years old, he was not allowed to sleep upstairs with the rest of the family because his mother was afraid that he would sexually assault his sisters because of his monstrous appearance. Robert K. Ressler describes Kemper's hellish childhood and isolation, created by his alcoholic mother. In their book entitled *Whoever Fights Monsters*, Ressler describes Kemper's living condition after his parent's divorce, for which Kemper's mother blamed him. According to Ressler, when Kemper was ten, he came home from school to find all of his belongings moved from the second floor of their home to the basement. Mrs. Kemper said that because Kemper was large, he would frighten his sisters and his appearance (size) made them uncomfortable and afraid of him (90). In the long run, Kemper's isolation and alienation served as a psychological factor in his life as a serial killer. Jack Rosewood also comments on Kemper's alienation in his

book entitled *Edmund Kemper: The True Story of the Co-ed Killer*, Kemper experienced isolation in his own home. “My mother and my sisters would go upstairs to bed, where I used to go to bed, and I had to sleep down to the basement” (3). Kemper made this living situation analogous to living in hell. Instead of fleeing his hellish environment, Kemper lived with his mother as an adult, and they constantly fought. Kemper’s self-proclaimed hellish environment contributed to his madness and desire for revenge against his mother.

Like the Monster, Kemper felt that he had to do something to overcome his psychological damage. He endured disappointment, experienced the same rejection, fought the exact self-doubt, endured the same ostracizing, and failed to overcome the same pain as his literary reflection—Frankenstein’s Monster. So, he too, utilized murder to avenge his isolation and rejection by embarking on a murdering spree in Santa Cruz, California, in 1972. Kemper did not stop murdering until he killed the culprit of his misery, which was his own mother as stated earlier. Kemper once admitted that he wanted to kill his mother since he was a child. “I knew long before I started killing that I was going to be killing, that it was going to end up like that. The fantasies were too strong. They were going on for too long and were too elaborate” (*Edmund Kemper Serial Killer Documentary* 00:13:10-31). According to psychiatrist Donald Lunde, author of “Murder and Madness,” Kemper as a child wished that everyone else in the world would die, and he commenced to rehearse his favorite modus operandi on his sister’s baby dolls where he would decapitate them (Rosewood 2). Decapitation, later on, became part of Kemper’s modus operandi after he murdered his grandparents. Forensic Psychiatrist Joel Fort stated that Kemper showed a lot of criminal pathology as a child. Fort revealed that

Kemper would cut off the heads of his sister's baby dolls (*Serial Killers: Edmund Kemper Serial Killer Documentary* 00:21:10-39). Kemper attempted to do something about his depravities, as a child, by running away to Los Angeles in hopes of living with his father, but his father rejected him as well. Kemper learned that his father remarried and had a new family. According to Kemper, his father did not want him around because his presence gave his wife headaches. This was a huge betrayal for young Kemper because he was close to his father as a young child (Rosewood 5). Afterward, he was sent to live with his grandparents, where he found his grandmother to reflect his mother's verbally aggressive behavior (*Serial Killers: Edmund Kemper Serial Killer Documentary* 00:6:30-51). Unbeknownst to Kemper's grandfather, he was preparing his grandson to become the infamous "Co-ed Butcher" when he presented him with a .22—caliber rifle for Christmas, one year, to hunt rabbits around his farm. Instead, on August 27, 1964, Kemper used the same weapon to kill his grandmother—Maude Kemper. He shot her three times in the back of the head as she sat at her kitchen table (Rosewood 21). To ensure her fatal demise, Kemper also stabbed her in the back with a kitchen knife. According to Kemper, he did not want his grandmother to suffer, so he had to make sure that she was dead. After he murdered his grandmother, at age fifteen, Kemper waited for his grandfather to arrive and shot him in the back of the head because, according to Kemper, he did not want his grandfather to witness what he had done. Afterward, he disposed of his grandfather's remains in his closet in order to camouflage his heinous deed. Kemper also stated that he did not want his grandfather to suffer mentally after the death of his wife. After Kemper murdered his grandparents, he began to worry about

being captured and imagined being apprehended, so he would have to kill them as well in order to evade capture. As a remedy to his paranoia, Kemper called his mother, while she was on her honeymoon, and confessed to the murder of his grandparents (Ressler 250). At the behest of his mother, Kemper called the police and waited on his grandparent's porch for law enforcement to arrive (Rosewood 22). This was only the beginning of the violence that would be unleashed by the six feet nine three-hundred-pound serial killer in the making.

After Kemper's arrest for the murder of his grandparents, Kemper underwent a psychiatric evaluation. After testing, prison psychiatrists diagnosed him as a paranoid schizophrenic. Later, when he was asked about the motives for his crimes, Kemper told prison officials that he just wanted to see how it felt to kill his grandmother (Rosewood 19). Consequently, Kemper was housed as an inmate at Atascadero State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Psychiatrist William Schanburger deemed Kemper to be a model prisoner, for everyone deemed him as brilliant and personable (*Serial Killers Documentary* 00:17:23-43). After Kemper was released from prison, he received his GED with hopes of becoming a police officer, but he was denied employment because he was too tall. Also, his juvenile records had been sealed, so his imposing stature was the main reason for his denial. In lieu of being a police officer, Kemper landed a job with the California Division of Highways as a road construction flagman. While working as a flagman, the "Co-ed Killer" took another chance at a life of murder because his fantasies of revenge against his mother did not suffice, so he began lurking the highways in California during the time when most college girls chose hitchhiking as their primary

means of transportation, and Kemper would offer them rides. According to Kemper, traveling was a coping mechanism after being incarcerated for five years. “I traveled a lot because I’d been locked up for five and a half years, so I was driving around. The driving around was a way to demonstrate that freedom” (Rosewood 17). In 1970, Kemper purchased a radio receiver transmitter to listen to police broadcasts. His mother gave him a university staff parking sticker but also made sure to advise her son that he was never going to attract the pretty co-eds at the school. Kemper shared another example of his mother’s scorn and hatred towards him as he stated, “My mother worked at the university but my mother wouldn’t introduce me to any of the young ladies at the university because I’m like my father and I don’t deserve to know any of these young ladies” (Rosewood 18). Mrs. Kemper’s pejorative statement reflects the theory of Richard Rhodes’ book *Why They Kill: The Discoveries of a Maverick Criminologist*, Rhodes suggests that Kemper’s childhood and adolescent condition reflects barbaric individualism, which means killers such as Kemper are antagonists to society. Kemper vindicated the belief of Rhodes from 1972 to 1973, as he plunged the city of Santa Cruz into a horrifying panic when he admitted to raping, mutilating, and murdering six young girls.

Kemper’s mother’s incessant scorn did cause internalized oppression; he began to believe that he would never be romantically involved with women; Kemper began to believe that he was not “good enough” to forge romantic relationships with women, especially after his release from Atascadero State Mental Hospital. His criminal record, according to Forensic Psychiatrist William Schanberger, would serve as an impediment in Kemper’s attempted love life. Kemper’s belief of inadequacy infused his desire to

decide that he would get girls by any means necessary, so this means became murder.

With the ridicule of his mother in hindsight, Kemper was fearful that his private quirks would cause public embarrassment, as he was quite inept as a lover, writes John Godwin in his book *Murder U.S.A.: The Ways We Kill Each Other*. So, Kemper's victims paid for two things: his resentment towards his mother *and* his sexual inadequacy. Kemper comments on his sexual frustration as he reveals, "And this craving, this awful raging eating feeling inside, this fantastic person. . . it was overwhelming me. It was like drugs. It was like alcohol. A little isn't enough. At first, it is, but as you adjust you need more and more" (Godwin 20). His sexual frustration also caused necrophilia as a variable in his modus operandi in addition to beheading his victims and chopping up their remains.

Robert Ressler, Ann Burgess, and John Douglas explain the reasoning behind Kemper's necrophilia in their book *Sexual Homicide: Patterns and Motives*. According to the authors, psychopaths, like Kemper, have a low arousal rate, so it takes more to stimulate them. Macabre mutilations excite lust murderers because it triggers a bizarre sexual fantasy, which develops in the dark recesses of their warped minds (25). This callous signature of decapitation and mutilation merited him the nickname "The Co-Ed Butcher."

Like Kemper, many serial killers rehearse the first murder because the first murder is the hardest, so Kemper would forge friendships by picking up hitchhikers. Kemper states, "At first, I picked up girls just to talk to them, just to try to get acquainted with people my own age and try to strike up a friendship" (Rosewood 18). As Kemper prepared to act out on his madness, he packed his two-door car with plastic bags, knives, blankets, and handcuffs and drove around to stalk his prey. His ideal victims were co-eds



because they symbolized his rage for his creator. Former Santa Cruz investigator Harold Cartwright stated that Kemper was killing his mother all along. Before he actually murdered the co-eds, Kemper would let them go until he could no longer control his urges. This was the beginning of his second murder spree.

Kemper's first victims during his second bout at murdering were Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa who were both students at the University of California at Santa Cruz. On May 7, 1972, the college students were hitchhiking to visit some friends at Berkeley. Kemper had mastered the art of making girls feel comfortable getting in his car. As he talked to his victims, Kemper would check his watch as if he was not certain that he had enough time to pick up anyone, making himself look more informal. He also wore eyeglasses to make himself look more studious and to eradicate any uneasiness among his prey. Lastly, Kemper jimmied his car doors to keep his victims from being able to open them from the inside. Kemper drove Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchese to a remote area, turned off his car, and presented his gun to the duo of vulnerable college students. Kemper commenced to tying up Luchese at gunpoint and forcing her into the trunk of his car. Then he turned his attention to Pesce who remained in the back seat with intentions on sexually assaulting her, but he could not do so because of his sexual incompetence. This inability further enraged the so-called "gentle giant." So, he stabbed her to death. Kemper states:

I stabbed her and she didn't fall dead. They're supposed to fall dead. I've seen it in all the movies. It doesn't work that way. When you stab someone, they leak to death. It wasn't working worth a damn. I stabbed her all over. When she turned

around, I couldn't see stabbing someone in their breasts, I was affected by her presence, Kemper said. "she ended up getting her throat cut, and I learned the term ear to ear because that's the way it went. (Rosewood 30)

After Kemper killed Mary Ann Pesce, he turned his attention to her roommate Anita stabbing her to death. Shortly thereafter, Kemper arrived at his Alameda apartment accompanied by both of the dead bodies in the trunk of his car. As part of his murderous signature, Kemper strategically decapitated the girls and cut up their bodies placing their heads in plastic bags and the rest of their body parts went into his bathtub. "You know the head's where everything is at, the brains, eyes, mouth. That's the person. I remember being told as a kid, you cut off the head and the body dies." The body is nothing after the head is cut off" (Rosewood 32). After Kemper cut the bodies into pieces, he took photos of his victims as he removed each piece and masturbated throughout his homicidal act. He also used the heads to simulate fellatio. After the heads began to decompose, Kemper would discard them. He would save the heads as trophies and use them for his sexual pleasure. He would sleep with the heads for nights at a time then return the remains to his trunk, dumping some parts along a remote highway (Rosewood 24). Kemper's act of sleeping with the remains of his captives is a primal denotation of the rejection and isolation that he experienced. Notably, Kemper's rejection was so profound that he preferred to live with dead bodies, or pieces of them, in order to cope with his fear of isolation and rejection.

Kemper's next co-ed victim was fifteen-year-old Aiko Koo. Koo accepted a ride with Kemper after she missed her bus on the way to the St. Louis World Trade Fair, where she was scheduled to perform Korean ballet. Kemper, using his same modus operandi, drove the high school student to an isolated location and pulled out his gun. He proceeded to tape her mouth and pinch her nostrils until she passed out. He mustered up the courage to rape her while she was unconscious, then strangled her to ensure her fatal demise. He continued to his previous modus operandi by taking her lifeless body back to his apartment where he cut her body into pieces and decapitated her. Kemper disposed of Koo's body but kept Koo's head by stashing it in the trunk of his car. The day after Koo's murder, Kemper had to attend a psychiatric hearing, as part of his parole. The doctors declared him as no longer a danger to society. Therefore, his psychiatrists gave him a clean bill of health, and he went back to his car where Koo's head was housed while taking another look at her head in his trunk. He later buried her head (facing up) in his mother's garden stating that he always wanted people to look up to her (his mother). After the murder of Koo, Kemper proceeded to murder Cindy Schall, Rosalind Thorpe, and Alice Liu employing the same Modus Operandi in 1973. The piece de resistance in Kemper's crime spree was murdering his mother, for she was the one who was responsible, according to Kemper, for developing him into one of the world's most gruesome serial murderers. Kemper said, "I wanted to kill my mother since I was eight years old. I'm not proud of that, but she went through three husbands like a hot knife through butter. I hated her" (Rosewood 61). It was on Good Friday, 1973, at about 5 a.m., Kemper clawed his mother with a hammer while she was asleep. Afterward, he beheaded

her and used her head for fellatio. Finally, he placed her head on a mantel and used it as a dartboard. He also cut out her larynx and tongue and put them into a garbage disposal; however, the disposal spewed her remains in his face. “That seemed appropriate as much as she bitched and yelled at me over the years” (Rosewood 63).

Edmund Kemper or “The Co-ed Butcher,” as he was euphemistically called by police, had an increasingly frantic desire to kill his mother because he felt rejected by the one who was supposed to love him unconditionally. Instead, he felt unwanted and hated. In Joel Norris’ book *Serial Killers*, Norris theorizes that parents who abuse their children physically and psychologically instill in them almost an instinctive reliance on violence as a first resort to any challenge. Norris also states that if children do not bond with their primary caretakers, there is no foundation for trusting others later in life. This can lead to isolation, where intense violent fantasies become the primary source of gratification (34). Hence, Kemper’s motives for murder also resonated with Athens’ proposed process of violentization just as his literary counterpart—Frankenstein’s monster. Kemper experienced brutalization at the age of eight by way of his mother, as she made him sleep in the basement, segmenting him from the rest of the family. The brutalization process was also the result of Kemper verbal abuse at the tongue of his mother during his childhood. Kemper remained a listening ear to the venomous epithets and bigotry inflicted upon him by his mother. Just as Frankenstein referred to his creature as “the demon,” “devil,” and “thing,” Kemper’s mother had “nicknames for him as well. His mother would call him a real weirdo and her murderous son (after Kemper murdered his grandparents), which solidified his low self-esteem. She would also say, “You’re just like

your father,” she screamed at Kemper, who soon realized that his mother hated him, her only son, because “I was a constant reminder of that failure.” She took her violent hatred of my father out on me. Mrs. Kemper hated him and blamed him for the failures (divorce) in her life.

Even more salient is the study of psychiatrists Martin A. Teicher and Jacqueline Samson’s article “Child Maltreatment and Psychopathology.” Teicher and Samson concluded that the human brain is highly adaptable. He further explains that various parts of the brain are affected by a hostile situation. When a child is born into a safe, attentive, and attuned environment, the child’s brain develops normally; however, when born into an unsupportive and hostile environment, the brain does not develop normally. The parts of the brain that are affected by hostility are: the corpus callosum (the conduit for transferring motor, sensory, and cognitive information (between the brain’s two hemispheres); the hippocampus (part of the limbic system that regulates emotion); and the frontal cortex (controls thoughts and decision making) (21). Unfortunately, Kemper’s childhood environment reflects Teicher’s study. Perhaps, Kemper’s neurological system did not develop normally as he grew older because of the verbal abuse and isolation provided by his parents. Kemper described his mother as a sick, angry, and sad woman whom he hated. He stated that all he wanted was love from her, but he had to watch her alcoholism increase (*Edmund Kemper Documentary: In His Own Words* 00:43:10-00:45:34). Notably, Kemper's psychological motivators for killing was psychological and sociological. Kemper had a documented mental illness (paranoid schizophrenia) and according to Investigator Harold Cartwright, the reasoning behind Kemper's crimes was

strictly environmental. The way he grew up, all his life experiences led him, to the point where he became a serial murderer (*Serial Killer: Edmund Kemper Serial Killer Documentary* 0048:02-00:49:10).

As Kemper grew older, his rage and resentment could not be controlled. Therefore, stage two (belligerency) was evident in the life of Kemper. His first incident of serious and brutal violence was when he murdered his grandparents. Kemper was desperate to do something about the “hell” that he lived as a child. As a child, Kemper was already beheading his sister’s baby dolls and playing execution games. He once told his sister that he fantasized about kissing his second-grade teacher. He told her “If I kiss her I would have to kill her first.”

Stage three (violent performance) had always been part of Kemper’s manifestation of his rage. At first, he practiced on his sister’s baby dolls by twisting off their heads; he then graduated to actually killing his grandparents. He finally crafted the doom of co-eds, his mother, and her best friend. Unlike the Monster, Kemper’s victims of his violent rage were all women because he was leading up to the ultimate murder, which was his mother. Kemper’s hatred and resentment towards his mother was the pre-crime stressor that motivated him to kill. In contrast to Frankenstein’s monster, Kemper murdered individuals who his creator did not know, while the monster in Frankenstein murdered individuals who were close to his. But the common denominator in their murderous revenge was the destruction of their creators.

Kemper’s virulence (stage four) was evident as a young child. In a 1991, interview, Kemper stated that before he murdered his mother, he said, “she’s gotta die, I

gotta die, or girls like that are gonna die.” The women that he murdered, prior to, his mother's murder can be considered as "warm-up" leading up to his mother's murder (*Edmund Kemper Documentary: In His Own Words* 00:35:07-00:37:23). Kemper, stated, in many interviews, that he killed his grandmother because she resembled his mother, so she was a proxy kill, so he considers his grandmother as abusive and he disliked her just as he disliked his mother. After the incessant verbal abuse by his alcoholic mother and the rejection from his father, Edmund Kemper, Jr., this created the homicidal obsession with his mother who tormented him throughout his childhood. In an interview with *Page Detective* magazine, Marj von Beroldingen asked Kemper how he felt when he saw a pretty girl after killing his mother. Kemper replied, “One side of me says, I’d like to talk to her, date her. The other side says, “I wonder how her head would look on a stick.” As previously stated, Mrs. Kemper’s verbal abuse towards Kemper left a ferocious impression on him as a young boy, as his mother would constantly compare him to his father saying that he would be equally unsuccessful with women. These words left a lasting and horrifying impact on Kemper, which led him to kill. Kemper also admitted that he chose co-eds as his victims because his mother was a university employee, and she had a very violent outspoken position on men for much of his upbringing.

In an A&E documentary titled *Edmund Kemper*, Kemper said as a result of killing coeds, it represented not what his mother was, but what she lived, she coveted, what was important to her, and he had to destroy it. After his arrest in 1973, Kemper professed his mother’s murder as appropriate. He attributed his actions to the result of her "bitching," screaming and yelling at him for so many years. Moreover, this abuse soon would suffice

for him to engage in the murder and decapitation of ten women. Although the abuse and maltreatment that Kemper endured as a child was unfortunate, and serve as psychological motivators in his heinous deeds, his homicidal rituals still defies comprehension among law enforcement.

Kemper was one of the very few serial killers to end his own career. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Kemper stopped at a telephone booth in Colorado to confess to killing the co-eds. Former Santa Cruz police officer Jim Conner recollects Kemper calling the station at about five a.m. Conner said Kemper was calling from a phone booth in Colorado where he drove for three days straight without sleeping. According to Conner, Kemper told him he had done something really bad and confessed to the murders of his mother, her best friend, and six co-ed girls *Serial Killer: Edmund Kemper Serial Killer Documentary* 00:29:05-00:30:04). The first time he called, the police thought he was joking or inebriated. Kemper stated to the police: “I killed my mother and her friend. And I killed those college girls. I killed six of them and I can show you where I hid the pieces of their bodies” (Rosewood 68). When deputies arrived at Mrs. Kemper's home, they found hair and blood in her closet and her bed soaked in blood. According to Kemper, he turned himself in because he became physically ill when he murdered his mother. He also stated that when he killed his mother that was the end (*Edmund Kemper Documentary: In His Own Words*). Kemper said he stopped killing because the original purpose was gone (Vronsky 265). Kemper felt that his mission was accomplished after he murdered his creator.



The criminal pathology of both of the Monster and Edmund Kemper was their inability to cope constructively with their lifetime of social depravity and undeniable subordination. This led to personal horrification and dissociation from mankind, which also became the instigating factors in their retaliatory ideology in which they blamed their environment. Over time, the two serial killers became enraged and internalized their labels (murderous, ugly, unwanted, etc.) that their own creators had imposed on them. Their losses of affection from their creators outweighed their hopes of being loved and accepted, so they became enraged and resentful, which led to the embarkation of violent, deadly crime sprees. Further, the catalyst of their murders was related to their obsession with revenge and retribution in the form of lost love and acceptance.

Although the serial murders that are featured in this chapter had different motives for murder. They do indeed have one thing in common—their own demise. After a life of crime and murder, they ended up ending their own lives as well as their victims. Kemper's life ended socially on November 8, 1973, as he was sentenced to seven years to life for eight counts of first-degree murder; his sentences will run concurrently (Rosewood 84-85). As far as Frankenstein's Monster, he disappeared into the Arctic Sea after Frankenstein's death alluding to the fact that he will soon die on his own. The Monster says, "I will float away to the island of ice and snow. Without food, even I shall die. I shall die as I lived: alone, without love, and hated by all ... Saying this the monster jumped through the open window of the cabin. It landed below on the piece of ice. It was soon carried away by the waves and lost in the darkness" (Shelley 74). Both serial killers

died as they lived: rejected, isolated, and feelings of ostracization because of their physical flaws, mainly their monstrous appearances.

It must be emphasized that when serial killers such as the Monster in *Frankenstein*, and Edmund Kemper III, committed murder, they both experienced some type of death, either socially or physically. Therefore, the self-destruction, or physical and social death, of all serial killers that are mentioned in this study will constitute the basis of the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

#### THE DEATH OF A SERIAL KILLER AND WHAT EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW

The objective of this dissertation was to examine beyond some of the obvious psychological precipitators that added to their stew of suffering: profit, fantasy, hatred, control, etc. examine the psychological motivators in real-life serial killers and their literary reflections. As well, this research was to incorporate new ideas, with the amalgam of current ideas, into the literary canon and investigate the linkages between real and fictional murderers. As stated in the introduction, serial killers appear more often in literature than in everyday life, so the aim was to shed light on the comparison between literary killers and the real-life ones who may have employed some of their homicidal rituals to their own murderous signatures. This project also examined the root of criminal behavior from different scholarly perspectives of criminologists, psychologist, psychiatrists, and neurologists. The context of this examination also highlighted the psychological motivators of murderers such as Charles Manson and Macbeth (*Macbeth*); Buffalo Bill (*The Silence of the Lambs*) and Edward Gein; and the Creature (*Frankenstein*) Edmund Kemper III. Specifically, four pre-crime stressors were explored: a. mental illness (paranoia); b. abandonment; c. gender dysphoria; and d. mother hate. All of these mental scripts ushered the aforementioned subjects into uncontrollable fantasies and appetites for acts of callous violence as many serial killers attempt to satisfy personal

desires such as power (Manson and Macbeth); revenge (Edmund Kemper and the creature in *Frankenstein*) or fantasy/womanhood (Buffalo Bill and Edward Gein). Nevertheless, these psychoses were fundamental in understanding why and how these psychosocial dysfunctions served as the foundation to mass and serial murder, or in the words of criminal profiler John Douglas, in his book *The Anatomy of Motive*, What? +Why? =Who? Coupled with the theories of medical experts and law enforcement, Lonnie Athens' "Violentization" theory (brutalization, belligerency, violent performance, and virulence) also played an important part in understanding the origins of homicidal proclivities.

In conducting this research, it is appropriate to conclude that the theory behind serial murder is a complex phenomenon. Unfortunately, scientific and psychological evidence to explain the enigma of serial murder is still in its infancy, so it is important to restate that there is *no* single theory, or combinations thereof, to explain the wrath of killers, especially those who were mentioned in this research. Instead, there is a preponderance of intertwining variables that ignite violent behavior and murder; however, the most significant factor in the life of crime, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, is free will. Sure enough, killers are driven by their own motives and reasons, but there is still no template for a serial killer. (Federal Bureau of Investigation Behavioral Analysis Unit 2009). The predisposition factors, in the lives of the subjects of this research –abandonment, mother hate, gender dysphoria, and mental illness—serve as psychological motivators to propel many individuals to explosive violence such as murder. Criminologists James Alan Fox and Jack Levin argue that serial killers are

capable of controlling their impulse to kill but choose not to do so (“Multiple Homicide: Patterns of Serial and Mass Murder” 419). Overwhelmingly, many individuals still make a personal decision to inflict harm in others regardless of life’s tumult and their maladjustment to their tragic circumstances.

In addition to studying the psychological impetus of violence and crime, this discourse shed light on how mass and serial killers—through their own psychosis—execute their own demise after targeting and killing their “prey.” According to the FBI, serial killers, like all human beings, are the product of their heredity, upbringing, and the choices that they make throughout their development. Furthermore, murderers end up killing themselves in addition to the other victims in which they target, or perhaps, the offenders were already dead—socially that is. As a result of this study, I also conclude that people who kill are already socially dead. Social death is defined as the way someone is treated as if they were dead or non-existent. This was the case in the lives of the killers that were examined in this research. Throughout the lives of serial murderers, they felt that their own well-being was compromised through ostracism and dehumanization, abandonment, physical and sexual abuse, and failure. Jana Králová, in her article “What is Social Death?” defines social death as the degradation and eventual cessation of one’s ability to function as a social being. Králová explains that social death occurs when the individual is set apart from the rest of humanity. Further, their hearts still beat, Králová explains, but these persons are merely existing. To add, Social Psychologist Richard Kalish theorizes social death as physical, psychological, sociological, and social. While many of the perpetrators in this study were victims in their childhood, the murders that

they committed were done through the minefields of self-destruction. In other words, the social death of these killers, which predates the physical deaths, of the featured serial killers, is a significant element that they exhibited as their lives traveled in a downward spiral.

In the case of Charles Manson, he already deemed himself as dead at the end of his trial in 1971. Manson, according to interviews and novels, said that he never lived because he had been in prison for most of his life. In fact, during his trial for the Tate-LaBianca murders, he would appeal to the bailiff to take him back “home” referring to his jail cell. Thus, the fact of him having no life bared the brunt of Manson’s rage. Murder, in Manson’s case, was retribution for the childhood abuse and abandonment that he underwent at the hands of his mother—Kathleen Maddox. Manson, as well as others, deemed him as an outcast with a failed social life with homosexual tendencies. It is safe to contend that Manson’s grievance society as a whole, so his victims became the sacrificial lambs for his feelings of anger, rejection, indignation, and worthlessness.

Charles Manson, in his speech—at the end of the Tate-LaBianca murder trial in 1971—expanded on his social death. Manson states, “My father is the jailhouse. My father is your system. . . I am only what you made me. I am only a reflection of you. . . I have done my best to get along in your world and now you want to kill me? Ha! I’m *already dead*, have been all my life. I’ve spent twenty-three years in tombs that you built. (*Helter Skelter* 510; emphasis added). Such words from Manson yields insight into his inner state and evidence of severe inner turmoil, alienation, hopelessness, and moral dysfunction. Thus, Manson’s social death, according to him, occurred at a young age. As

stated in chapter one, ‘the Killer Guru’ was abandoned by his mother and was abused by his uncle and prison mates. Manson made jail analogous to tombs because he felt like a walking corpse, due to feelings of rejection and neglect throughout his life. Thus, he felt that he had been obliterated from society. He also would refer to himself as a big “lump” of nothing. In order to resurrect his existence and significance, he did two things: created a circle (the Manson family), and he posited violence into the pockets of his victims. His self-aggrandizing motive for murder was also rooted in his appetite for world infamy. In *Helter Skelter*, Manson said that he wanted to shake up the world. Manson and Macbeth deemed themselves to be heroes and leaders, but they retaliated against those who they felt were deserving of their vengeful quest. Unfortunately, the infamy and attention that validated their existence and feelings of grandiosity just lead to more devastation—physical death.

Undoubtedly, Manson’s paranoia was also a driving mechanism in his social death as it was in his literary counterpart—Macbeth. The more Manson and his followers murdered (following the murder of Gary Hinman), the more they felt that he had to evade capture just like his literary mirror Macbeth. Subsequent to the murder of King Duncan, as stated earlier, Macbeth felt the need to perform his murderous deeds thereon because of his paranoia and to avoid being captured, killed, and going to hell. Both serial killers exhibited the same motivational typology of extreme paranoia, which contributed to their desire to murder, which also led to their physical deaths. The murderous escapades of Charles Manson and his murdering minions came to an abrupt halt on October 12, 1969, at Spahn Ranch (*Helter Skelter* 179). After a nine-and-a-half-month trial, the members of

the Manson family, who participated in the Tate-LaBianca murders, were sentenced to death on April 19, 1971; this was later changed to life in prison as mentioned in chapter three. Charles Manson, who was diagnosed by prison officials as a paranoid schizophrenic, anti-social, and a social outcast, with a failed romantic and social life, would spend the rest of his days at Corcoran State Prison until his *physical* death on November 20, 2017.

In comparison to Charles Manson, the murderous activities of Macbeth necessitated the same driving mechanism of paranoia and to be the beneficiary of power. Macbeth's social death emerged after he murdered King Duncan. It was then that he could no longer enjoy his kingship, and his wife could not enjoy her reign as queen, so she committed suicide. Macbeth became embittered and recluse because—as stated earlier—because he was suspicious of everyone. Eventually, as noted in chapter three, his social death catapulted into physical death at the hands of MacDuff, Scotland's new ruler, at the end of the play.

MACDUFF. Hail! King! Because that's what you are now. Look, here I have  
 Macbeth's cursed head. We are free from his tyranny. I see that you have  
 the kingdom's noblemen around you, and they're thinking the same thing  
 as me. I want them to join me in this loud cheer, Hail, King of Scotland!  
 (5.8.352).

Macbeth's distorted self-perception, imposed upon him by the three witches finally came to an end. Macbeth's peculiar interpretation of their predictions of his kingship *did* materialize but led to his social demise and then ushered to his physical



death by Macduff. These two killers aspired to make a statement to the world; murder was a way to compensate for the unrelenting life failures and to validate an imagined self-image being in control and deified by fellow peers. As I applied the theories of scholars of criminology to the killers studied in this research, it provided a more accurate picture of the effect of the repetitious homicidal and matricidal rituals.

In considering the deaths of the featured serial killers in this dissertation, their social deaths warrant feelings of perceived failures and feelings of worthlessness. Such is the case for Buffalo Bill as discussed in chapter four. His dissatisfaction with self and the medical staff (for declining his gender reassignment surgery) ignited his obsession for "performing" his own gender reassignment. Thus, he indulged in fantasy to become a woman, which created some volatile proclivities and eventually harming the women that he needed to make the transformation. His social decline is evident because of his hermit living arrangement. As author Thomas Harris demonstrates, in *The Silence of the Lambs*, Gumb segments himself from society as he delights in his murderous task of becoming a transsexual. Tied to Gumb's aspiration for womanhood was the need to kill women in order to achieve his new identity. As stated earlier, Hedonist lust killers are deemed to be the most dangerous because they really do not want to kill. In Gumb's case, the women had something that he needed—their skin. After the lethal hustle and bustle of tailoring vest and wigs out of his victim's skin, Clarice Starling fragmented Gumb's mission when she apprehended him at his home. Gumb's end to his life as a "tailor" and aspiring transsexual was put to rest by Clarice Starling—the FBI rookie. Harris writes:

... He's hit in the chest. They'd taught her how to seal one, to put something over it, A rain slicker, a plastic bag, something airtight. Reinflate the lung. She's hit him in the chest then. What to do? Wait. Let him stiffen up and bleed. Wait. . . Starling had to be positive he was dead. . . She kept her eyes on the hand beside the gun until she kicked the gun away. His eyes were open. He was dead, shot through the right side of the chest, thick blood under him. (*The Silence of the Lambs* 349)

The physical death of Augusta Gein (Edward Gein's mother) resulted in his social death. Gein became more recluse. Sure enough, Gein murdered and resumed grave site s in his attempt to become his dead mother. His mother would penalize his social life, so he spent his childhood in solitude. Gein and his brother, Henry, were never allowed to have any friends or significant others. Gein was also secluded geographically; he lived on a secluded farm, and hardly traveled anywhere else and mostly kept to himself. Gein eventually died on July 26, 1984, of Cardiovascular disease at the Mendota Mental Health Institute in Madison, Wisconsin.

The death of Victor Frankenstein's creature (in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*) occurs after he is grief-stricken by the death of his creator. He then disappears and is never seen again. "The creature looked down at the body of Frankenstein. 'Good-bye my creator,' it said. 'I made a hell of your life. But it was nothing like the hell I had to live through.' The monster jumped through the open window of the cabin. It landed below the piece of ice. It was soon carried away by the waves and lost in the darkness" (Shelley 74). Many literary scholars suggest that the monster committed suicide. Either way, the

story's conclusion—the monster's own death—expressed that the killer felt that his creator, as well as his loved ones, were deserving of his vengeful acts as he made his life analogous to hell. In examining the monster's character, his physical and sociological circumstances were the determinants in his death. His brutal conduct, during the novel, reflected his anger and resentment towards his creator. The heinous nature of his murders lied in the fact that he felt discounted by society. As of this research project, the monster's real-life counterpart, Edmund Kemper III, is still alive as an inmate at Vacaville State Prison. As mentioned in chapter II, Kemper requested the death penalty but received a life sentence instead. Although his criminal behavior has not led to his physical death just yet, Kemper social death also caused him to be prone to violence. Just like the Monster, in *Frankenstein*, social interaction became a precious commodity as a result of their monstrous appearances. His troublesome upbringing as he endured the stress of the verbal abuse and ostracism by his mother, crafted Kemper's disconnection towards his peers—especially women. Therefore, this caused great disassociation which led “the Co-ed Butcher” to act on his murderous fantasies. Imprisonment is indeed, a form of social death. In his book *Prison and Social Death*, Joshua Price discusses that prison is to face systematic violence, humiliation, and separation from family and community. He further contends that social death is permanent, and even after release, many individuals lack the ability to readjust to society (e.g. Charles Manson, who begged to stay in prison because he felt that he could not adjust to society) his acts of violence resulted in his own imprisonment, which is a form of death—social death.

Angry rumination emerged as a result of social death in the lives of the killers that were studied in this dissertation. According to Fox and Levin the killers externalizes their anger and disappointment, blaming others for their own real and perceived losses. They experienced a sense of suffering from others as well as self-absorbed suffering. The common denominator in all of these murderers was a pathological extent of uselessness, self -doubt, and despair. As a result, these Charles Manson, Edward Gein, and Edmund Kemper and their literary reflections (Macbeth, Buffalo Bill, and the creature in *Frankenstein*) made their victims responsible (through physical death) for their social deaths.

Eventually, murder leaves the offenders with a fragmented life (constantly evading capture), the inability to commune with others, and thereby having to retreat to an imaginary world. If or when a killer is caught, some of them, as punishment is imprisoned for the rest of their lives, while some in end up dead while attempting to craft the doom of others.

A significant amount of research was instrumental in the exploratory—not explanatory—reasons behind the deeds of Charles Manson, king Macbeth, Jame Gumb, Edward Gein, Frankenstein’s creature, and Edmund Kemper III. Social death was the result of the grave dysfunction, neglect by family, peers, and co-workers, which became traumatizing to the featured offenders. The social deaths of these individuals, as previously stated, were precipitators to murder which led to their physical deaths (except Edmund Kemper) Finally, Macbeth, Manson, Jame Gumb, Edward Gein, Frankenstein’s creature, and Edmund Kemper III, sought validation by way of murder. Their social

deaths were the main source of their frustration and discontentment. Their life of failure was concomitant with the inability to cope with life's hardships (financial inadequacy, peer-rejection, isolation, and abuse). In fact, I must theorize that social death emerges as the killers cope with life by isolation and retreating to their own diabolical fantasies. As time elapses the joy and self-gratification exacerbate into the mine of the killer and serve as precipitants to violence and murder. Regrettably, their victims become the sacrificial lambs.

It is further proposed that my findings concerning the social deaths of the featured serial killers may necessitate further investigation: a) the significance of the presence of the father's during the socialization process; b) the expositions of the "graduation effect" of serial killers. Can this be truncated before a human life is lost? c) is the social disorganization theory a pertinent factor in determining a violent individual? d) Why does the average serial killer commit the first murder at age twenty-seven? and e) Is there a way to detect, or effective methods of pinpointing psychological markers or behaviors and interrupt the cyclical fantasies and desire to kill? In all, their own suffering, as well as their victims, was an unavoidable aspect of their murderous pilgrimage. Their need to make others suffer and pay for their own troubled pasts did not prevent their own walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

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